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THE  
WAR WITH MEXICO.

BY R. S. RIPLEY,

BREVET MAJOR IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY, FIRST LIEUTENANT OF THE  
SECOND REGIMENT OF ARTILLERY, ETC.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

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# THE WAR WITH MEXICO.

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## CHAPTER I.

General Scott's Memoranda on Vera Cruz and its Castle—Concentration of Forces under the Island of Lobos—Organization of his Army—Arrival at Anton Lizardo—Landing opposite Sacrificios—Investment of Vera Cruz—Siege and Bombardment—Capitulation of Vera Cruz and San Juan d'Ulloa—Affair of Puente del Medio—Affair at Medellin—Observations.

MAJOR-GENERAL SCOTT submitted his first written memoranda on "Vera Cruz and its Castle" to the Secretary of War at Washington on the 27th of October.\* He had had a previous conversation with the Secretaries of War and Navy on the same subject, and, by a comparison of the dates with those of the letters to General Taylor, in which the subject is treated of, it appears that the consideration of the attack on Vera Cruz, with a view to positive action, was entertained about the latter part of the month of October. On the 12th of November the general-in-chief added a supplement to his memoranda, which, with some few important exceptions, contained expressions of the same views as the first of the papers.†

In both, Vera Cruz was spoken of as the first great object to be attacked, but with a view to a

\* "Vera Cruz and its Castle." Executive Document, No. 59, House of Representatives, first Session of the thirtieth Congress, p. 54.

† "Supplement." *Idem*, p. 56.

movement thence on the capital of Mexico. Unless with that in view, in the opinion of the general-in-chief it was not worth one tenth of the lives, time, and money which its capture and that of the Castle of San Juan d'Ulloa would cost. The estimated necessary force for the immediate object was an army of at least 10,000 men, consisting of cavalry (say) 2000, artillery (say) 600, and the remainder infantry. This estimate was not diminished in the supplement, although General Scott averred that *personally* he would be willing to undertake the capture of Vera Cruz, and, through it, the Castle of San Juan d'Ulloa, with a less number and the assistance of the blockading squadron.\*

The estimate of force was not based upon the capacity of either city or castle for resistance ; for, although the locality and strength of both were known to a degree, no definite plan of attack on either was proposed ; and the discrepancies in the views presented on the 27th of October and on the 12th of November, in reference to this matter, are remarkable enough to induce the belief that no very serious consideration was given to the subject by General Scott. In the first it was said, "*The castle, after the loss of the city, might still hold out for many weeks, perhaps months, until compelled to surrender from want of subsistence,*" &c.† In the supplement, with no statement of additional

\* "Supplement." Executive Document, No. 59, House of Representatives, first Session of the thirtieth Congress, p. 57.

† "Vera Cruz and its Castle." *Idem*, p. 55.



information, it was given, as the opinion of the general-in-chief, "*that the fall of the castle would necessarily soon follow that of the city.*"\*

Although it can hardly be believed that the estimate of numerical strength necessary for the investment and capture of the town and castle was too large under any anticipated state of things, yet the data which were enumerated as the basis of the estimate were in some degree erroneous. They were, however, speculative rather than real, for it can hardly be deemed that General Scott knew any thing of the condition of things in Mexico on the 12th of November. The principal of these was, that Mexico could assemble at Vera Cruz, or in the vicinity, an army of "some twenty or thirty thousand men to garrison and cover (in the field)" the city;† and this at the time when her main army was at San Luis, when the Mexican government was bankrupt, and, without success, was straining every nerve to supply Santa Anna's army, and when the whole *tierra caliente* of Mexico, in the vicinity of Vera Cruz, could not support an army of half the greater number estimated.

About the date of the supplemental memoranda the idea of assigning General Scott to the command of the expedition was entertained, and perhaps as remarkable a portion of the document as any is that in which he assumes to be careful of the credit of the administration, to which he was

\* "Supplement." Executive Document, No. 59, House of Representatives, first Session of the thirtieth Congress, p. 57.

† Idem *ibidem*.

known to be hostile. After enumerating many considerations, he said, "All these calculations (many of them probabilities) ought to be carefully considered before fitting out an expedition, the failure of which, from inadequate means, *would be fatal to the credit of the administration* and the character of our country."\* This expressed anxiety, taken in connection with the suggestion that he, "the highest in army rank," was "the proper officer to carry out on the spot the instructions of the government in respect to that division" (of troops between the lines of operation), "and to direct the principal attacking column on and from Vera Cruz,"† and with the discrepancies existing in his memoranda, would induce the belief that the chief object of the papers was to obtain the assignment to such command of "the highest in army rank."

With regard to the division of the forces, he estimated, on the 12th of November, that he could draw the entire requisite number of troops for the expedition against Vera Cruz from General Taylor's command, leaving to that officer 11,000 men, of which 2500 should be regular troops. With that force he supposed that General Taylor could "threaten, and probably take, Saltillo, if not San Luis de Potosi, &c., &c., combined with the movement on the new line of operations from Vera Cruz;" for he did not, at the time, advise that operations on the northern line should be confined to

\* "Supplement." Executive Document, No. 59, House of Representatives, first Session of the thirtieth Congress, p. 57. † Idem. Idem, p. 59.



defense, although it was apprehended, with reference to that line, that the people of Mexico presented this dilemma: "*If you come with few, we will overwhelm you; if you come with many, you will overwhelm yourselves.*"\*

On the 16th he addressed additional memoranda to the Secretary of War, in which the numbers for the different lines were stated to be estimated at 13,250 men for the northern line, and 14,000 for the expedition against and from Vera Cruz. To make up these numbers, he depended upon the arrival at Brazos San Jago of nine new regiments of volunteers by the time he was in readiness to sail from that point.

Having proved upon paper, to his own satisfaction, that it was practicable to raise the force from the troops then and soon to be in service, and the expedition having been determined upon by the President, he received orders to hold himself in readiness to proceed to Mexico and take the direction of the expedition. He considered the assignment as a personal favor, and was personally grateful;† and having obtained the command, of which he had deprived himself, originally, by his own act,

\* "Vera Cruz and its Castle." Executive Document, No. 59, House of Representatives, first Session of the thirtieth Congress, p. 54.

† "I left Washington highly flattered with the confidence and kindness the President had shown me in many long personal interviews on military matters. For more than two months my expressions of gratitude were daily and fervent, nor were they much less emphatic toward the head of the War Department."—*General Scott to Mr. Marcy, February 24th, 1848.* Executive Document, No. 59, House of Representatives, first Session of the thirtieth Congress, p. 4.

he set about making his estimates for material on such a scale as should leave little chance of a failure, which might ruin his own and the credit of the administration. Some of these, including "140 flat boats, to put ashore at once say 5000 men, with eight pieces of light artillery," and "a pontoon train to pass rivers,"\* had been included in his memoranda of November 16th. The last item, which was strongly urged, is evidence sufficient of the knowledge possessed by the general-in-chief of the country in which he was to operate; for, on the whole route between Vera Cruz and the capital of Mexico, there is not one stream deserving the name of any thing larger than a creek, and which is not fordable.

The estimates for ordnance and ammunition were left with the Secretary of War before the departure of General Scott from Washington, and included, besides a large siege train of twenty-four pounders and eight-inch howitzers, from forty to fifty mortars, and from eighty to one hundred thousand ten-inch shells.† Among other provisions for his expedition, he obtained a sum of money for secret service, and was given verbal instructions to prosecute operations as his judgment, under a full view of all the circumstances, should dictate.‡

General Scott desired more explicit instructions;

\* "Memoranda for the Secretary of War." Executive Document, No. 59, House of Representatives, first Session of the thirtieth Congress, p. 60.

† Mr. Marcy to General Scott, April 21st, 1848. *Idem*, p. 24.

‡ *Idem*, November 23d, 1847 (not sent). Executive Document, No. 60, House of Representatives, first Session of the thirtieth Congress, p. 836.



and, having mentioned the subject to the Secretary of War, in compliance with a request, he submitted a projet which went more fully into details, and expressed more fully the confidence reposed in the general by the President ;\* but it was not adopted or signed, and, since it was not, it may be believed that the submitted projet expressed more than the President felt, and that he did not choose to commit himself in full to the support of General Scott.

On the 24th of November the general-in-chief left Washington for Mexico, by way of New York and New Orleans. The quarter-master, General Jessup, had proceeded to the latter place, to be nearer the seat of war, and to further the business of his department, and with him General Scott completed his arrangements for the transportation requisite for his expedition. While at New Orleans he employed several spies to proceed to Mexico and obtain information, and opened a correspondence with Commodore Connor upon the subject of the expedition and making arrangements for the reception of the intelligence obtained.† He then proceeded to Brazos San Jago, and, upon his arrival, took the action and issued the orders which have been noticed in chapter eighth of the first volume of this narrative.

The troops from General Taylor's command concentrated rapidly at their different points of em-

\* Executive Document, No. 59, House of Representatives, first Session of the thirtieth Congress, p. 61, 62.

† Executive Document, No. 60, House of Representatives, first Session of the thirtieth Congress, p. 842, 847.

barkation, all being in position at or near Brazos San Jago and Tampico by the end of January ; but various delays and disappointments occurred in the arrival of transports, which prevented the speedy sailing of the expedition. Most of them had their rise in natural causes ; but, when taken in connection with the attempt to supersede him by the appointment of a lieutenant general, some were subsequently attributed by the general-in-chief to the intention of the authorities at Washington to sacrifice him.\* And it is a somewhat remarkable fact, that, while engaged in directing the Vera Cruz expedition, General Scott had arrived at the same conclusion with reference to himself, which, in consequence of his action, General Taylor had expressed in his own case, that he was doomed to be sacrificed.

But in the month of February the transports began to arrive at Brazos San Jago, and the embarkation of the troops was commenced. Each vessel, as soon as she received her complement, proceeded at once to the rendezvous, under the island of Lobos, some sixty miles to the south of Tampico. Scott sailed on the 15th, leaving Worth to superintend the embarkation of the remaining troops, and, touching at Tampico, made arrangements to leave a competent garrison, and hastened the movement from that point. On the 21st he arrived at the general rendezvous. On the 25th Worth sail-

\* General Scott to Mr. Marcy, February 24th, 1848. Executive Document, No. 59, House of Representatives, first Session of the thirtieth Congress, p. 11.



ed from Brazos San Jago, having seen all the troops afloat from that point except the battalion of the second regiment of dragoons, which was to embark on the two following days.

From Tampico, Twiggs's division was on board ship by the 28th, and Patterson's embarking rapidly.

While at Lobos General Scott organized his army.

The first brigade of regulars, under Worth, was made up of Duncan's field battery, the second and third regiments of artillery, the fourth, fifth, sixth, and eighth regiments of infantry, and two independent companies of volunteers. The second brigade, under Twiggs, of Taylor's field battery, the first and fourth regiments of artillery, the first, second, third, and seventh regiments of infantry, and the regiment of mounted riflemen.

The volunteers were organized into a division of three brigades, under General Patterson.

The brigade under General Pillow consisted of the first and second Tennessee and first and second Pennsylvania regiments, and Steptoe's battery of twelve pounders. General Quitman's brigade was made up of the South Carolina, Georgia, and Alabama regiments, and General Shields's of one regiment of New York troops and two of Illinois.

In addition to this force of infantry and field artillery was the cavalry, consisting of detachments from the first and second regiments of dragoons, and one regiment of Tennessee horse.

## II.—B

The whole numerical force of the army was over twelve thousand men.

The order of landing was also issued at Lobos, and constituted Worth's brigade the first line, Patterson's division the second, and Twiggs's brigade the third.

Worth having arrived on the 2d of March, the fleet of transports broke up from the anchorage under Lobos, although the entire force had not then reached the rendezvous, and made sail for Anton Lizardo. By the 6th the greater part of the whole fleet was concentrated there, and preparations were made for the descent. On the 7th, General Scott and Commodore Connor, accompanied by most of the general and staff officers present with the fleet, and many naval officers, reconnoitered the coast with a view to select a point of landing. The whole party was on board a small steamer, which passed in close proximity to the Castle of San Juan d'Ulloa, whence the enemy opened several heavy guns, but all of his shot missed; a fortunate circumstance for the Americans, for one heavy shell, had it struck, would have sunk the steamer, and destroyed the organization of both the army and squadron.

The point finally determined upon as that of debarkation was on the shore immediately west of the island of Sacrificios, some three miles south of the city and castle. The island afforded shelter for the fleet, and no batteries or other preparation for resistance were discovered at the point or in the



immediate vicinity. The order was issued for the debarkation to take place on the morning of the 8th, and the troops were in readiness, but the weather indicated a norther, and, by the advice of the naval officers, the descent was postponed until the following day.

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Vera Cruz, a city of about 15,000 inhabitants, is immediately upon the shore of the Gulf of Mexico. It is surrounded, on its land fronts, by a continual line of fortifications, which, although neither entirely regular nor strong for defense against regular approaches, are nevertheless formidable to a direct assault. The northwestern side of the town is washed by the waters of the Gulf. At the southeastern angle, on the beach, is Fort San Jago, a bastion of considerable capacity, with a cavalier, mounting several heavy guns. A continued line of bastions and redans, ten in number, encircles the town, ending at Fort Conception, a bastion similar to Fort San Jago, at the most northern point, and on the shore of the Gulf. The intermediate bastions and redans are small, though solidly built, and capable of mounting from eight to ten guns each. The curtains by which they are connected are of thin wall, proof only against musketry, and of but little use. None of the defenses of the city are protected by ditches, as the heavy northers which prevail would soon fill them with the driving sand; but, upon the receipt of intelligence of the intended attack, efforts had been made to sup-

ply their place by digging a system of *troux de loup*s about the walls. Within them and between the bastions, the ground was covered with a thick growth of prickly pear, in itself a serious obstacle.

At the time of the American attack, the fortifications of the city were armed with eighty-six cannon of different calibers. The greater number were of heavy metal, including six eight-inch sea-coast howitzers and eight heavy mortars. The garrison was of some 3000 men, including artillery and infantry of the line, active battalions of states in the vicinity, and the national guards of Vera Cruz.

The country about Vera Cruz is generally a level, sandy plain, bounded by sand-hills at different distances from the town. On the south and west, the first of these are at a distance of about one thousand yards. On the north the plain extends nearly two miles, to the hamlet of Vergara. The sand-hills are of different heights, and the valleys between them are filled with thorny underbrush.

The Castle of San Juan d'Ulloa is upon a reef immediately opposite, and a thousand yards from the city. The body of the work is a quadrangle of great capacity. The southern bastion has a cavalier of high command. The sea front, which, however, looks upon the Gallega reef, is covered by a demi-lune and redoubts of re-entering place of arms, and beyond these by a water battery, extending entirely along the front. These outworks, however, as they look only seaward, give but little additional strength to the castle, for the channels



of approach to the city are either from the north or the south, and the direct fire upon them must be given from the body of the work.

One hundred and twenty-eight guns were mounted upon the castle. Most of them were heavy, and many of modern manufacture, including eight-inch sea-coast howitzers and ten-inch Paixhan guns. Its garrison consisted of about 1000 troops of the line.

Both city and castle, at the time of the descent, were scantily supplied with subsistence. The governor of the state had endeavored to provide it, but with little success; for, in the various struggles of the factions in the capital, his representations and requests had been unheeded. Nevertheless, with what he had been able to collect, General Morales, the commandant, resolved to make good the defense as long as possible, trusting for aid to the speedy coming of the vomito, and possibly of a relieving army.

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The full amount of material for which General Scott had estimated had not arrived at Anton Lizardo when he contemplated landing; but of the one hundred and forty-four surf-boats, sixty-five were at hand, and with these the arrangements were made to disembark.

Early on the morning of the 9th the troops of Worth's command were placed on board the different men-of-war and steamers; Patterson's and Twiggs's were concentrated upon those still capable of containing troops, and upon transports, and all

taken in tow by the steamers of the squadron and transport fleet. By noon these arrangements had been completed, and the vessels having troops on board had made the passage from Anton Lizardo to Sacrificios.

Meanwhile, a close reconnoissance had been made of the point of landing from on board a small steamer, without discovering any preparation for resistance. The small vessels of the squadron were, however, stationed close in shore, to sweep the beach and cover the landing, if necessary.

Worth's troops entered the boats, which were manned by the officers and sailors of the navy. It had been ordered that they should be formed in line, but a strong current setting round the island of Sacrificios prevented this. Being heavily laden and with but little room to handle oars, as they pushed off from the ships, the boats soon got in confusion, and many drifted toward the shore. A hawser was in consequence thrown out from the steamer Princeton, to which the different boats made fast, and all were mixed up without the possibility of arrangement until the movement commenced.

Worth therefore contented himself with placing the colors of the different corps in proper order, and, with directions for each boat to pull for its own, gave the order to cast off, and the whole mass of boats swept toward the shore. It had hardly been believed by any that the landing would be unopposed, and the opening of an action was anxiously



looked for. For a short distance from the beach the sand-hills afforded excellent positions for masking either artillery or infantry, and as the landing, if opposed, was the most hazardous part of the undertaking, it was unreasonable to expect that the enemy would permit it without a struggle. But no resistance was made; and as the boats struck the beach, the troops jumped into the water, gained the shore, formed instantly, and with a cheer rushed to the top of the sand-hills in search of an enemy, but none appeared.

Positions were taken up on the beach and sand-hills for the night, and the boats returned to the fleet for the landing of the remaining troops. This was effected without accident, and the main body of the army was on shore before the following morning.

During the night, two officers, examining the shore toward the town in search of fresh water, fell upon an outlying picket of the enemy and drew its fire. The Mexicans, having once opened, kept it up for some time, though with only the effect of slightly wounding one or two men who were landing at a distance of nearly half a mile, for they fired at random and at great elevation. No attention was paid to it by Captain C. F. Smith, who commanded the American pickets in that direction; but Colonel P. F. Smith, having landed with the rifle regiment, moved it in that direction, and opened a spattering fire, with no more effect than the Mexicans. Finding himself relieved in this

manner, the captain withdrew his company, and left the rifles to see it out.

When morning broke upon the 10th, Worth proceeded to take up the line of investment. The party of Mexican infantry which had made the disturbance during the night showed itself upon the sand-hills in the direction of the city. It was first fired upon by the battery of mountain howitzers, but the range was too great, and a gun from Taylor's battery was brought up, which soon dispersed it. The investment was then commenced.

A high sand-hill near the beach, about one and three quarter miles from the city, was occupied by Worth's division, and thence the different corps extended to the left into the interior. The weather was exceedingly hot and sultry, and the movement through the deep sand was tedious and difficult. Worth's brigade was, however, in position during the morning, and Patterson's troops were moved to the left to continue the line.

When actually convinced of the landing of the American army, the governor of the State of Vera Cruz issued a proclamation to the inhabitants inciting them to continue the resistance, but announcing his determination of leaving the town with the cavalry, and serving the garrison by cutting off the supplies and scouting parties of the invading army. He put his intention of leaving into execution, and, accompanied by a force of infantry, took post among the sand-hills to oppose the continuation of the investment.



This force was first encountered by Patterson, who found the infantry in position about an old stone building, the hacienda Malibran, near a lagoon which was upon his route, and in a magazine some hundred yards to the south. The cavalry occupied the sand-hills overlooking the lagoon. Taylor's battery was directed upon the magazine, and Pillow's brigade advanced against the hacienda, from which the Mexicans were driven after a short skirmish. Pillow then turned with one regiment toward the magazine, which was abandoned by the enemy on his approach. Leaving one regiment at the magazine, and another at Malibran, with the remaining two the enemy was pursued. His parties steadily retired, keeping up a scattering fire upon the pursuers, until they collected in force on the hills occupied by the cavalry. A short but spirited skirmish ensued, but the enemy was quickly driven from the hill, and retired under the protection of the guns of the city.

The heavy guns of both city and castle played upon Worth's and Pillow's commands whenever they came within view, but the distance was too great for most of them, and it was not until late in the afternoon that any attempt to reach the American positions was successful. Then, with great elevation, a shell was thrown from a ten-inch gun in the castle, which exploded in the vicinity of Worth's troops. They were at once drawn back behind the sand-hills, out of range. Pillow's, upon the hill which had been taken, were exposed to

the fire from the city, but the men lay close behind the crest, and suffered no loss.

The landing of subsistence and baggage was continued as fast as the boats could ply between the fleet and the shore; but it was a slow process, and but a small quantity of subsistence and only part of the baggage were landed during the day.

On the morning of the 11th Quitman's and Shields's brigades advanced to relieve Pillow's troops (which had passed the night without water) and to continue the investment. While the relief was taking place, the Mexican skirmishers reappeared, advanced, and opened a noisy fire. Quitman attacked them with a detachment, and after a skirmish, in which Lieutenant-colonel Dickenson and several privates were wounded, drove the whole with loss from his vicinity.

Twiggs's brigade took up the movement during the day, and after continued skirmishing, in which it met with but little loss, drove the enemy from the ground to be occupied. In passing the position of Patterson's troops, a random shot had killed Captain Alburdis, of the second infantry, and wounded a private. But by noon on the 12th, with no other hinderance, Twiggs arrived, and fixed his headquarters at Vergara, on the beach north of the town, and the investment was complete.

The principal difficulties encountered in these movements were in the nature of the ground, and the thick chaparral in the valleys, the scarcity of water along the route, and the almost insupporta-

ble heat of the weather. The guns from the city and castle had indeed kept up a continual fire upon any point where the troops were visible, but without other effect than to occasion the loss and annoyance which has been mentioned.

On the morning of the 12th a heavy norther set in, and interrupted all communication between the fleet and the shore. It ceased for a few hours on the 13th, during which four mortars and a small quantity of ordnance stores were landed, after which it returned with renewed violence. Active operations were therefore prevented, and all which could be done was to reconnoiter, with a view of selecting sites for batteries.

Soon after landing, General Worth had noticed Point Hornos, a sandy bluff which extended to the beach some fourteen hundred yards south of the city, as being a good position whence to commence approaches. A number of ridges of sand extended around it, forming natural traverses, and the beach furnished a hard and firm road for the transportation of guns and material, protected by the point from observation, and in great measure from direct fire. Finding it unoccupied by the enemy, he at once detached two companies, under Captain Vinton, third artillery, to take possession of it. The party took position in some lime-kilns on the point, and, notwithstanding the continued fire from both city and castle, with which the enemy sought to overwhelm it, held possession without loss for some eight or ten days.



Colonel Totten, chief engineer, after much reconnaissance, determined upon a point further from the shore. The Campo Santo, a square stone inclosure containing a chapel and vaults, some eleven hundred yards from the city and about the same distance from the beach, had been seized and occupied during the reconnaissance. The ground directly in its front was generally level to the city, though covered in part by chaparral. The sand-hills rose in its immediate vicinity, and the approaches from the American camp, though tedious, were in general protected from direct fire by the inequalities of the ground. The vicinity of the inclosure was selected as the position for the batteries.

The norther, which interrupted the communication between the fleet and the shore, brought into the anchorages at Anton Lizardo and Sacrificios many transports, having on board the troops, munitions, and subsistence. In the boisterous weather several vessels broke from their moorings, and were wrecked, causing the loss of many cavalry horses and of valuable material. On the 17th the storm abated, and the landing of material was recommenced with all the energy which could be commanded.

On the 18th, six mortars, four twenty-four pounder guns, the eight-inch siege howitzers, and a large quantity of ammunition, were brought ashore. Besides this ordnance, the dragoons, a company of light artillery, with all their equipment and the

horses which remained to them, were landed, and commenced refitting. A quantity of quarter-master's property, trains, draught animals, and forage, sufficient to afford means for commencing operations, were also obtained, although but a small part of the large estimate and order had arrived.

On the night of the 18th ground was broken near the Campo Santo, upon the parallel and batteries. Of these, battery No. 1 was located behind a sand-hill, some three hundred yards to the east of the inclosure. The parallel ran thence along its front. Battery No. 2 was placed at the foot and in front of a sand-hill, about one hundred and fifty yards in rear and to the left of battery No. 1. Battery No. 3 was along the parallel, and immediately west of the Campo Santo.

The working parties which could be spared from so long a line of investment (some six miles) were necessarily small, but, by strenuous exertions, the different works were commenced, and cover obtained during the night for exposed positions, and the labor was continued on the following day.

No other attempt was made by the enemy to retard the construction, except by cannonading the troops whenever they showed themselves. His guns were admirably served, but the range was too great for accuracy; the working parties kept close in the trenches, and the fire produced no delay. Without other interruption, the construction was continued during succeeding days, and in the mean time the landing of material went on.

The main army remained quiet in its camp. Some few skirmishes took place between pickets ; and parties of soldiers and sailors, which straggled off into the country and committed depredations on the inhabitants, were, in some instances, cut up by the rancheros. At different times during the nights, the Mexicans, becoming alarmed by the approach of single individuals engaged in reconnaissance, would open a noisy fire of musketry from the walls of the city, and occasionally would overwhelm the position at Point Hornos with a shower of shells and bullets. These bursts of indignation were "full of sound and fury, signifying nothing," and no attempt was made to reply in any manner.

By the evening of the 21st, however, the first three mortar batteries had been constructed, with their magazines and traverses, the parallel and boyaux widened, the parapets, in most places, made exceedingly strong, and the approaches from the camp protected, for the passage of troops, by trenches, in those places where the natural features of the ground did not cover them. During the night seven ten-inch mortars and a quantity of ammunition were transported to the batteries from the beach ; a proceeding requiring much caution, for the Mexicans watched with great vigilance, and, aiming in the direction of the noise, threw shells and rockets at the carts as they passed the open ground between the beach and the batteries, and impeded the labor by several times stampeding the draught animals. Nevertheless, the partial armament was



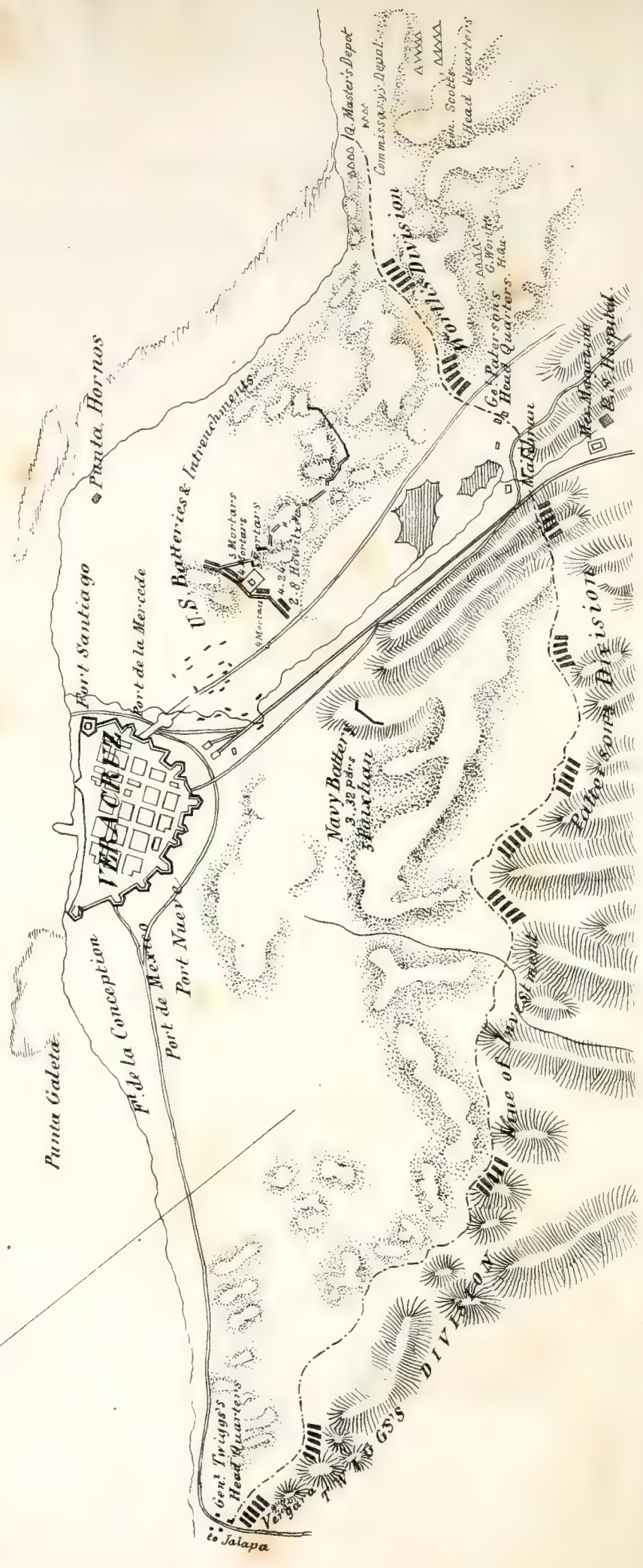


# SIEGE OF VERA CRUZ.



MEXICO.

GULF OF



brought up, and the trains retired without loss or serious damage.

On the morning of the 22d the firing parties of artillerymen took possession of the batteries and planted the mortars. The ordnance men arranged their materials in the magazines, and by noon every thing was in preparation for opening the bombardment on the city. In addition to the ten-inch mortars, six coehorns had been brought up and planted along the parallel, under the impression that they might possibly throw to the city, but without much calculation upon their effect.

At two o'clock General Scott summoned the city to surrender. As the city was his immediate object of attack, he offered to stipulate, in consideration of a surrender without resistance, that no batteries should be located in the city against the Castle of San Juan d'Ulloa, unless a fire should be commenced from the latter upon the American garrison which should occupy the town. General Morales, who commanded both city and castle, returned a peremptory refusal, ending with the assurance that he would make good the defense to the last, and informing his excellency (General Scott) that he could commence his operations of war in the manner which he might consider most advantageous.\*

The reply having been received, at four o'clock in the afternoon the bombardment commenced, and

\* Correspondence. Executive Document, No. 1, Senate, first Session of the thirtieth Congress, p. 226, 227.



was at once replied to by the enemy, with every gun and mortar, in either city or castle, which could bear upon the trenches. The American shells were at first inefficient; but a few rounds gave a correct knowledge of the range, and from that time they were showered with surprising accuracy into the devoted city. The small vessels of the squadron, as the bombardment commenced, crept up under Point Hornos, and added their heavy guns to the American armament, in spite of the fire with which the enemy endeavored to reach them from the castle.

The Mexican fire was kept up with great vigor for an hour, and both guns and mortars were admirably served; but against the trenches it was almost inefficient, for they were too small a mark for the mortars, and, notwithstanding the direct shot grazed the crest of the parapets, it did no damage to the sunken batteries of the Americans. The ten-inch shells from the guns in the castle, striking in their descending curve, had more effect, for in some cases they penetrated the parapet, killed Captain John R. Vinton, a gallant and accomplished officer, who commanded the firing party of that day, and wounded several privates. But, as night approached, the Mexican fire slackened, and that of the smaller guns ceased. The mortars in the city and castle, however, kept up the fire, and the shells fell thick about the trenches during the night, but none struck inside or in the batteries.

The American fire had been so rapid at the opening of the bombardment that the first supply of

shells was nearly expended in three hours, and it, too, slackened for a time ; but an additional quantity was sent from the beach as soon as it was dark. Although the boyaux between batteries 2 and 1, through which the powder and shells were carried, was exposed to a raking fire, and a rocket actually passed its whole length while several powder-barrels were being carried to the magazines, no accident occurred, and, with the additional supply, the bombardment was resumed, and steadily continued throughout the night.

The work of landing material had progressed during the day, and the stores on the beach opposite the camp of Worth's division were considerably increased.

A separate battery, to be manned by officers and seamen from the squadron, was located at a point upon a sand-hill in front of General Patterson's command, at a distance of about a thousand yards from the city, and the construction of the battery was commenced. It was hidden by thick chaparral and sand-hills, and the work progressed without interruption from the enemy. Three thirty-two pounders and three eight-inch Paixhan guns were landed from the different vessels of war for its armament, and were transported over a portion of the route during the afternoon.

Three mortars were brought up to the trenches and planted in battery No. 3 during the night, and the supply of ammunition was increased. The rapid fire of the preceding day had, however, cut up

the platforms, and rendered repairs necessary, which delayed the firing on the following morning.

The smaller vessels of the squadron returned on the 23d to their station under Point Hornos, and resumed the cannonade of the town; but the guns of the castle were opened in reply, and after a short time they were withdrawn to the anchorage under Sacrificios.

During the day a norther again sprung up, preventing communication with the fleet, while the supply of shells was still limited, and, in consequence, the mortar practice, although continued, was less lively than it had been on the previous afternoon.

The Mexicans replied sparingly to the fire from the batteries, and though at times an apparent endeavor would be made to overwhelm them, it was kept up for only a few minutes together.

The Americans were meanwhile busily at work in constructing the battery for the naval guns, and another along the parallel west of No. 3 for the siege guns of the army. The work was extremely difficult, for the norther blew the sand about so as to fill up the trenches; but nevertheless it progressed, and the battery for the naval guns was finished and partially armed during the night.

Three twenty-four pounders were brought up to the trenches for the new battery along the parallels, but it was not finished, and could not be opened on the following morning.

As the supply of shells on shore was limited, the



mortar firing on the morning of the 24th was only at the rate of one shell in five minutes. The Mexicans, apparently encouraged by this falling off, opened all their batteries which would bear in a continual cannonade upon the trenches. It had the effect of dismounting one of the ten-inch mortars, and wounding a few men.

In the mean time, battery No. 5, which was armed with the naval guns, was nearly ready for action. All the guns were in position except one, which was at the hacienda Malibran. The order of the general-in-chief was, that the battery should not be opened until completely armed, and its firing was likely to be delayed until the following day, for the only practicable approach to the battery for so heavy a piece of artillery was by a road having one of the bastions of the city directly upon its prolongation. This bastion, however, was enveloped in the smoke of its own cannonade upon the American mortar batteries, the air was still, and General Pillow determined to place the gun in position. He detailed a strong party from his brigade, and hauled it rapidly over the exposed route without being observed, and it was soon after safely mounted. The chaparral in front of the battery was then cleared away, and its fire was opened. Until that time the enemy had been in ignorance of its existence; but, turning attention from the mortar batteries, every gun which could bear was at once directed upon the new object, in a fierce cannonade, which was kept up for many hours.

The deep embrasures which it had been necessary to construct for the service of the naval guns presented marks to the enemy which he did not hesitate to avail himself of, and his shot, sent with great accuracy, often penetrated them, by which four sailors were killed, and several others, besides soldiers of the guard, were wounded during the day. The sailors at the guns in the battery at first fired wildly, and directed their shot at the houses of the city; but, having gratified themselves by shooting away one or two flags, they brought their heavy battery to bear upon the bastion of Santa Barbara, the most westerly bastion of the town, with marked effect.

The norther abated during the 24th, and additional ammunition of all kinds was landed. The new battery, No. 4, having been completed during the day, another twenty-four pounder and two eight-inch howitzers were placed in it during the night, which completed its armament. All the batteries were furnished with a full supply of ammunition, and early on the morning of the 25th all were in full play.

The spectacle was exceedingly animated. Ten ten-inch mortars, four twenty-four pounders, two eight-inch siege howitzers, three long thirty-two pounders, and three long eight-inch Paixhan guns, all constituting an exceedingly heavy artillery force, were worked with all possible rapidity. The mortars kept up an unceasing shower of shells, which, crashing and tearing into the town, did great

mischievous, and set on fire every building which was combustible. The siege guns were kept in play upon the Mexican batteries at the gate of Merced, south of the city; but, although the fire was rapid, a clump of chaparral interfered with the aim and its efficiency. The heavy guns of the naval battery were, however, worked upon the bastion of Santa Barbara with great effect. Although the distance was great for breaching purposes, the heavy shot cut deep into its solid walls, knocked two or three embrasures into one, dismounted two or three pieces, and demolished the thin curtain north of the bastion for fifty yards.

The enemy, with his much larger armament, did not fail to reply, and his artillerymen kept bravely to their posts, sending their shot with as much rapidity as they received that of the besiegers. Fort San Jago and the bastion of Santa Barbara were exceedingly active. In spite of the fire of the naval battery upon the latter, and the occasional shower of shells which was directed at the former from the mortar batteries, they could not be silenced, and for many hours the cannonade and bombardment was unceasing on both sides.

But the mortar practice had done its work upon the city. The shower of shells which had for four days been poured upon it had become perfectly insupportable to the inhabitants, and its violence, instead of diminishing, was daily increasing. For a chance of security, they crowded upon the mole and in the northern part of the town; but the ranges



of the shells were steadily increased, and it might be expected that in a short time they would fall thickly also in that quarter. The place had been closely invested for twelve days, and the stock of provisions, never abundant, was nearly exhausted. Many poor people, who had been detained in the town, were without the necessaries of life, and while prowling about the streets in search of subsistence, fell before the American fire. Women and children suffered alike from it in their houses, and in a greater degree than the soldiers, who were crowded around the walls and protected by traverses, and therefore escaped without great loss except from the direct fire.

A great portion of the population of Vera Cruz was of foreigners, and, notwithstanding the large fleet which they had seen approaching, many had been insensate enough to suppose that the defense would be made good, or had no idea that the town would be attacked by a bombardment, although they could in reason have hoped for but little immunity if the place had been carried by assault. After the results of the bombardment of the 22d, 23d, 24th, and 25th, they became convinced of the futility of the resistance, and in the afternoon of the 25th their consuls obtained permission of the Mexican governor to send a flag of truce to the American general. The communication which accompanied it prayed for a suspension of the bombardment, in order to allow time for the foreigners with their families, and for the Mexican women

and children, to leave the town. The firing of the Mexican batteries, which had slackened, was discontinued, and, upon the appearance of the flag, that of the besiegers ceased likewise.

As General Scott had sent safeguards to the foreign consuls so soon as the investment had been completed, and as, with a full knowledge of the impending siege, they had remained in the town when they had a free egress until that time, and a free communication with the neutral vessels of war under Sacrificios until the 22d, he refused to grant the petition, and informed the consuls that their prayer must be addressed through the Mexican governor.\*

So soon as the flag had returned to the city, the American batteries resumed, and continued their fire as vigorously as during the previous part of the day; but the Mexican batteries remained silent, and during the evening a bugle call for a parley was sounded from the walls of the town. It was misunderstood and unheeded, and the bombardment was continued without interruption throughout the night. Four additional mortars were placed in battery along the parallel, between battery No. 1 and the Campo Santo, and were ready for service by daylight on the morning of the 26th. When the firing parties were relieved at four o'clock in the morning, a heavy norther had again commenced, which made it a difficult matter to serve

\* Correspondence. Executive Document, No. 1, Senate, first Session of the thirtieth Congress, p. 229-231.

the mortars ; but, in spite of the blinding sand, ten were kept in play, and continued the fire until after daybreak. At that time a flag was displayed on the beach near Fort San Jago ; but it was unheeded from the batteries, and proceeded on down the beach until it was received at the picket guards of the main camp.

The consuls had presented the situation of the foreigners to General Morales, but, disliking the responsibility of agreeing to any terms of surrender, he had feigned sickness, and turned over the command to General Landero, who received and entertained the requests. In consequence, he proposed to surrender, and requested that General Scott would appoint commissioners to arrange the terms of a convention with commissioners on the Mexican side.\*

Scott at once ordered a cessation of fire, and from eight o'clock on the morning of the 26th, the time at which the order was received at the batteries, the cannonade and bombardment was discontinued.

Generals Worth, Pillow, and Colonel Totten were appointed commissioners on the part of General Scott, and during the afternoon met Colonels Herrera, Villanueva, and Lieutenant-colonel Robles, commissioners on the part of General Landero, at the lime-kilns on Point Hornos.

The instructions of the American commissioners

\* Correspondence. Executive Document, No. 1, Senate, first Session of the thirtieth Congress, p. 231.



were to demand the surrender of the garrisons of the Castle of San Juan d'Ulloa and Vera Cruz as prisoners of war, with the intention of sending the rank and file to the United States. As it was not known whether Landero had authority to surrender the castle, they were instructed, in case of his inability or refusal, to refer the case back to the commanding general.\*

The Mexican commissioners demanded that the troops included in the capitulation should be allowed to march out, without parole, with all their arms, accouterments, stores belonging to the different corps, and the allowance of field artillery corresponding to the force; and that the exercise of their religion and rights of property should be guaranteed to the inhabitants of Vera Cruz.† After discussion, without agreement, the commission broke up at night, and reported. The demands of the Mexican commissioners were laid before General Scott, who submitted his ultimata in reply to General Landero on the following morning, demanding, at the same time, that the commission should meet again at ten o'clock, and proceed at once to the definite conclusion of terms of capitulation.‡

It reconvened at the appointed hour, and the discussion was continued throughout the day. The surrender of the castle was one point of difference, for Morales had not turned over the command of it

\* Executive Document, No. 1, Senate, first Session of the thirtieth Congress, p. 233.

† Idem, p. 234, 235.

‡ Idem, p. 235, 236.

to Landero. But by nine o'clock at night the terms had been agreed to, and the articles of capitulation had been signed by the commissioners, and approved by General Scott, Commodore Perry (who had been represented in the latter part of the discussion by Captain Aulick), and by General Landero.

By the convention Vera Cruz and the Castle of San Juan d'Ulloa, with all their armaments and munitions of war, were surrendered. The garrisons were permitted to retire, after laying down their arms, the officers giving their parole for themselves and their men not to serve during the war until regularly exchanged. The Mexican troops were permitted to march out of the city with the honors of war, to the field where the surrender of arms was to take place, to salute their flag when struck, and the civil and religious rights of the inhabitants of Vera Cruz were guaranteed.\*

The surrender took place on the 29th. Worth's command was drawn up on the east of the plain, south of the city, and Pillow's brigade of volunteers upon the west. The Mexican troops marched from the gate of Merced at ten o'clock in the morning, and halted between the lines. The officers gave in their paroles, and, with the exception of a single company, the troops laid down their arms. They then marched off on the Orizaba road, and Worth's command entered and took possession of the city and the Castle of San Juan d'Ulloa.

\* Executive Document, No. 1, Senate, first Session of the thirtieth Congress, p. 237.

The interruptions to the operations of the siege from the interior of the country had been few and unimportant. The exertions of the cavalry force which had left the city, and of scattered bands of rancheros, had been confined to the attempt to stop supplies of cattle and vegetables, and skirmishing with parties of the besieging army.

A guerilla had taken post at the Puente del Medio, some three miles from Vergara, on the road to Jalapa, for those purposes and for observation. Its presence did no particular injury; but on the 24th Colonel Smith sent a company of rifles to examine the position and obtain information of the strength of the enemy. Upon its approach to the bridge, which was obstructed by abattis, the officer in command was met by a white flag. Supposing that the Mexican force would surrender, he met the flag on the bridge; but, instead of an offer, he received a demand, and learned that a surrender was expected from him. Withdrawing his company to the sand-hills east of the bridge, he sent information of the strength and position of the party to the camp. General Twiggs sent Smith with 200 men to his support, and, upon his arrival, the Mexicans opened a fire of musketry from the hills on the west of the bridge. Smith immediately sent two companies across the rivulet on the left, one on the right, and advanced the remaining force by the road and bridge. A short skirmish ensued; but



the Mexicans broke and fled in a short time. They were pursued some distance, several of them were killed and wounded, and at sundown Smith returned to camp, having had four men severely wounded in the affair.

A considerable force of Mexican cavalry, principally of rancheros and national guards, had its head-quarters at Medellin, a village several miles south of Vera Cruz, whence parties were detached to annoy the American lines. On the 25th Scott ordered Colonel Harney to proceed in that direction, with his mounted and dismounted dragoons, to break it up. Upon arriving at the Puente de Morena, over the Medellin river, he found the enemy in some force. The bridge was barricaded and defended by infantry, and parties of lancers were in position to the rear.

As the dismounted dragoons approached a skirmish ensued, in which the Mexicans killed a corporal and wounded two privates. Finding the force and position of the enemy stronger than had been anticipated, Harney drew back, and sent a request for two pieces of artillery to camp. They were ordered from Steptoe's battery; and, as the news of the affair reached the camp, various straggling parties of volunteers and dismounted dragoons marched without orders to the scene of the skirmish. General Patterson proceeded thither with Judd's section of twelve pounders, and a regiment of Tennessee volunteers, but did not interfere with Harney's arrangements. Upon the arrival of the ar-

tillery, it was directed upon the bridge, which it cleared with a few shots. The footmen ran forward and tore down the barricade, when the cavalry advanced at speed, sabering and dispersing the enemy, who fled in haste and utter confusion. The pursuit was continued for six miles to the village of Medellin, and the Mexican force in that direction was completely broken up. At night the various parties returned to the camp. The total loss in the affair was two killed and thirteen wounded, one officer being included in the latter.

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By the capture of Vera Cruz and the Castle of San Juan d'Ulloa, General Scott obtained a secure base of operations for the advance, by the direct and shorter line, upon the capital of Mexico; and, what was of as much importance as the possession of the particular points, he inflicted another powerful blow on the morale of the Mexican nation.

As important, because the possession of either, for a base, was not absolutely indispensable. It is true that in the vicinity of Vera Cruz were the best anchorages on the Gulf, and the buildings of the city afforded conveniences for the different depôts required; but Sacrificios and Anton Lizardo were both out of gun-shot of the fortifications. Had a sufficient number of troops been at the disposal of the American general, he might have established a temporary depôt on shore opposite either, left a force of some three or four thousand men to have

blockaded Vera Cruz, and marched at once with his main army to Jalapa, clearing the tierra caliente, and preventing the approach of a relieving army at the same time. If it were expected to bring down the Castle of San Juan by the capture of Vera Cruz, it being isolated, it would have been reasonable to expect that the isolation of both, by such a movement, would have brought down both at once.

But the great reputation which the castle had for strength, and the pride and confidence with which it was regarded by the Mexican people, which had been in no way diminished by the fact that the American fleet had lain off it for a year without attempting an attack, induced the belief that its possession was necessary for future operations; and this, with the desire of capturing the most formidable fortification of Mexico, caused the expedition to be undertaken as it was. It was successful, and the point was gained; but time was lost, and the Mexican president took advantage of it to quell the disturbances in the capital, and to reorganize his army for future defense. Of the particular state of things which existed, General Scott was, of course, ignorant, and could only take action with reference to the capture of the city and castle in the manner which had been determined upon. The various causes of delay were great causes of annoyance to him, for he was anxious to effect his object and get out of the tierra caliente before the season of the vomito, and the operations of the



siege were pushed as vigorously as the various natural difficulties would allow.

These natural difficulties were the most serious, by far, which were encountered; for the enemy's opposition to the investment was comparatively nothing, and a cannonade from a distance of over a thousand yards can seldom be efficient against troops covered partially by their own intrenchments and the inequalities of the ground.

As for the works of attack, they were of the simplest character, including but the parallel and the different batteries. That they were well and scientifically constructed is evident from the exceedingly small loss from even the distant cannonade; but as the approaches were not continued, they can hardly be mentioned as works of great magnitude or as evidences of particular military skill.

The labor bestowed upon them, and, in fact, the labor of the whole siege, was great, from the nature of the ground, the difficulty of communication with the fleet, and the heat of the climate; and the fact that the labor was accomplished and the investment kept up, speaks much for the energy of the army.

The bombardment of the town has been censured by foreigners, and has been termed an unnecessary act of cruelty. How much humanity might have been favored by taking the place by direct assault is very questionable; and, since the town was to be attacked, there were but the two methods. The loss on the American side must have been heavy

in case of the assault; for, although the curtains were thin, and useless against a cannonade, they were obstacles, and the houses of the city were strong enough to make good defenses against such an attack. The armament of the bastions, too, was powerful and well served, and would have cut down the assaulting columns in great numbers in their approach; and under no circumstances is a commander called upon to sacrifice his own troops to save the suffering of the enemy. General Scott, having the necessary material and position to reduce the city by bombardment, did all which humanity could have required of him when he offered to stipulate that, if the town was surrendered, he would establish in it no batteries against the castle; which not being accepted, the bombardment followed as a matter of course, and, with the investment, brought down the city.

The castle fell by its isolation and the want of provision. Its capture did quickly follow that of the city, but it would not necessarily have been a direct consequence if it had been properly defended and provisioned. But, nevertheless, it must have soon fallen, had the attack been made directly upon it, whether the city were taken or not. The castle was within good mortar range of the shore, was of ancient construction, was built of soft coral rock, and the best positions for shelling and battering it were outside of the town.\* “*Fortress-*

\* General Scott to Mr. Marcy, March 21, 1847. Executive Document, No. 1, House of Representatives, second Session of the thirtieth Congress, p. 223.

*es are nothing in themselves when the enemy, having command of the sea, can collect as many shells, and bullets, and guns as he pleases to crush them.*"\* That the estimate made by General Scott, of from forty to fifty ten-inch mortars, and from eighty to one hundred thousand shells, was quite large enough, if filled up, to crush any artificial fortress within range of land batteries, can hardly be doubted; and, strong as San Juan d'Ulloa undoubtedly was from its position, it must have sunk under the incessant stream of fire, had it been once commenced from forty or fifty mortars.

When the surrender took place, but a small portion of the ordnance was in battery or at hand, and, as the castle was not provisioned, it was not needed; but soon after, forty-nine ten-inch mortars, and between forty and fifty thousand shells, arrived. As General Scott had determined to take the city, in order to secure his batteries against the castle from annoyance of the guns of the city, and to reduce the length of his line of investment, they were in time for service against the castle, had they been needed.

In the few months which had elapsed between General Scott's departure from Washington and the capture of Vera Cruz, the greater portion of this amount of ordnance and ordnance stores had been manufactured in the interior of the United States, had been transported to the sea-board, and

\* Napoleon's instructions to Marshal Soult in reference to Bayonne. Napier, chapter iii., book xxiv., vol. iv., Carey & Hart's edition, 1842, p. 390.



thence to Vera Cruz—a fact which speaks volumes of the mechanical resources of the American republic for war.

The reasons which induced Santa Anna to turn his whole attention to the northern line have been noticed in previous observations. A knowledge of the real importance of Vera Cruz and its castle may have contributed to form his determination, in addition to those reasons.

Had Mexico possessed a navy, the fortified harbor of Vera Cruz would have been of the highest importance to both belligerents, and its possession would have been of indispensable necessity to the army of the United States before marching on the direct line to the capital; for otherwise, her ships would have taken refuge and shelter there in case of danger, or of the necessity of refitting, and have sailed thence, on any favorable occasion, to break up the transportation of men and material on the Gulf. But as she had no navy, it was of no importance to Mexico in that respect; as it was closely blockaded, it was of little use as a port; as an enemy who had command of the sea could bring as much material as he pleased to crush it, it must fall after a short resistance if attacked from the land, and if the enemy could land as he did; and, finally, if he chose, and had a sufficient force, he might blockade it by land as well as by sea, and, marching on Jalapa, have prevented the gaining of any time by the Mexican commander. In either of the latter cases the garrison and material were lost.

Santa Anna knew all this; and, years before, when speaking of an invasion of the country, he had said, "In every defile of these mountains they will find a Thermopylæ."\* With the knowledge that the points of defense were in the interior, it may be deemed strange that his action with reference to Vera Cruz was not the same as that in reference to Tampico, for they were both very much in the same situation. Had he at the time been in the full tide of popularity, which the achievement of a victory would have given him, it is very probable that such a course might have been adopted; but the pride of the nation in the castle, which had held out against the efforts of its own arms for two years, would have rendered any such action exceedingly hazardous to himself, unless his power was confirmed by the prestige of previous success. By not withdrawing the garrison and material, he lost both. He gained delay, which was important to him under the existing circumstances, and he avoided responsibility.

As for the defense of Vera Cruz, it was passive, and consisted of but a distant cannonade. The answer of General Morales to the summons of General Scott was demonstrative of bravery, and, so far as words are concerned, it will compare well with those which, when supported by a stout resistance, become famous in history, but if not, soon pass into forgetfulness.

Although Vera Cruz, as attacked, must have fall-

\* Waddy Thompson's *Recollections of Mexico*, chapter xxiv., p. 230.

en, yet, had preparations been made by provisioning the garrison, and the non-combatants have been sent out of the city before the investment, there were many elements of resistance in favor of the besieged, which, if properly improved, would have given the city a better claim to the title of "heroic" than which she can assert at present. The structure of the houses, the size and good condition of the armament, the immediate vicinity of the castle, the heat of the climate, to which the besiegers were unaccustomed, the nature of the coast and the country, were all in favor of the defense; and though the besieged could not have escaped capture, they might have delayed it, and set an example which would have gone far to have done away the effects of previous defeats, and aroused the waning spirit of the Mexican nation. It is true that it is difficult for a city to resist a bombardment, but the structure of the houses of Vera Cruz gave the capacity for a longer defense than that which was made. Had they not, the city must have capitulated at once, or have been destroyed by conflagration. As it was, however, with all these advantages, the short period of resistance, and the accounts published in excuse for it, of the horrors of the bombardment, increased the dread of American arms, and prevented the organization of any defense in the towns in the interior.



## CHAPTER II.

Preparations for an Advance from Vera Cruz—Order proclaiming Martial Law—Expedition to, and Occupation of Alvarado—Advance from Vera Cruz—Information of the American General on Mexican Affairs—Arrival of advanced Corps at Plan del Rio—Mexican Lines of Cerro Gordo—Twiggs's Intention of attacking them—General Scott's Arrival—Arrival of Worth's Division—Operations of 17th of April—Capture of the Hill of El Telegrafo—Order of Battle—BATTLE OF CERRO GORDO—Occupation of Perote—Observations—Disposition of new Troops made at Washington—Preparations for an Advance—Discharge of seven Regiments of Volunteers—Naval Expeditions against Tuspan and along the southern Coast of the Gulf.

THE attention of the American general was directed to the preparations for an advance into the interior of Mexico immediately after the fall of Vera Cruz.

In the delay which took place in awaiting the arrival of transportation, Worth was appointed governor of the town, and at once entered upon his duties. The various disorders which must always ensue upon the occupation of a city by an invading army were soon checked under his administration. There were comparatively few in number of the class of serious crimes, and those were promptly punished; for having failed, after repeated recommendations, made several times through the Secretary of War, to obtain from Congress any authority for courts martial sitting in foreign countries to take cognizance of the various matters of good order and moral discipline not included in

the Rules and Articles of War, General Scott had taken the responsibility upon himself. The partial countenance of the Secretary of War, and the indirect advice of the Chairman of the Military Committee of the United States Senate,\* in favor of such action, had been expressed, but not received by the general-in-chief at the time. At Lobos he had issued an order establishing military commissioners, to which such matters were to be referred, and thus provided for what had hitherto been a great want in the American service. Under the provisions of his order, one person, found guilty of rape, was hung, and others, of robbery, were punished by imprisonment.

Confidence was in a great measure restored among the inhabitants, both Mexican and foreign, and they proceeded in their usual business. The ruins of those parts of the city which had suffered by the bombardment were cleared away, and the traces of the siege, in a great degree, were obliterated.

On the day after the surrender General Quitman was sent with a brigade upon Alvarado, to co-operate with the navy in the capture of the place, from which it had twice retired without success. He arrived there on the 1st of April, but found the town already in possession of a party of seamen from the steamer Scourge, which had been station-

\* Mr. Marcy to General Scott, February 15th, 1847. Executive Document, No. 60, House of Representatives, first Session of the thirtieth Congress, p. 874.





[illegible]

ed by Commodore Perry to watch the mouth of the river. Lieutenant Hunter, who commanded the steamer, had found the town unoccupied by Mexican troops, and, having demanded its surrender, quietly took possession of it. The forms were all gone through with, and when the naval and military expeditions arrived in force, there remained nothing to do but to hold it. Hunter's conduct was disapproved of, and for summoning the town upon his own responsibility, and for disobedience of orders, he was arrested and brought before a court martial. The capture of Alvarado, like some other affairs of later date and of more importance, was thus ended by an official quarrel. General Quitman's command marched for Vera Cruz on the 4th, and on the same day the commodore sailed for Anton Lizardo, having left a detachment of seamen and marines to hold the new acquisition.

The material for land transportation arrived slowly at Vera Cruz from the depôts of the northern line of operations and from the United States, and the exertions made to obtain draught animals from the country in the vicinity were not very successful. But by the 6th of April transportation to a limited amount was in readiness and soon to arrive, and the order was issued for the march.

The brigades of regulars had been organized into divisions, to suit the brevet rank of Major-general Worth, which had been received soon after the surrender of the city. His was the first, and Twiggs's the second division. The brigades of the first were

under Brevet Colonel Garland and Colonel Clarke ; those of the second under Brevet Brigadier-general Smith and Brevet Colonel Riley.

Twiggs was ordered to march on the 8th, and Patterson to follow him on the following morning, with two of his brigades. The third was directed to await transportation. The movement took place as ordered, and both corps were put en route, the first regiment of infantry having been detached from Twiggs's division to form the garrison of Vera Cruz and San Juan d'Ulloa.

The march had, however, but little reference to the movements of the enemy, either known or anticipated, and was, in fact, a retreat before the yellow fever, which was believed to be close at hand. The information possessed by General Scott in reference to Mexican affairs was exceedingly defective. On the 5th, he had just received information of the cessation of the revolution in the capital, the return of Santa Anna to power, and the expulsion of Farias. At the time he expressed his confidence that negotiations would soon be offered on the part of the Mexican government, and that, if American commissioners were sent out to his head-quarters, they would be met by the time his army arrived at Puebla.\* Rumors were rife in Vera Cruz that a Mexican commission had already been appointed, and that, with a committee of Congress, it was awaiting the arrival of the American

\* General Scott to Mr. Marcy, April 5th, 1847. Executive Document, No. 60, House of Representatives, first Session of the thirtieth Congress, p. 909.



general at Jalapa. When Twiggs marched, but few anticipated any opposition on the route to that point.

On the 9th General Scott received information that Santa Anna had arrived at Jalapa with six thousand men, and although he did not place implicit confidence in the report, he sent the information to Patterson and Twiggs in advance;\* but although, upon the 11th, they were in close vicinity of the enemy, they had not so much information, nor so explicit, as that of General Scott's. Twiggs had reports that there was a force somewhere at hand, but it was variously estimated by his informants at from two to thirteen thousand men. Pillow, who was temporarily in command of the volunteer division, and was one day's march in rear of Twiggs, believed that the enemy was not over three thousand strong.† Scott received their estimates, such as they were, on the evening of the 11th, and then believed that the number of the enemy did not exceed four thousand, but nevertheless he started on the 12th in person to reach the scene of action, and Worth's division marched on the 13th.

Twiggs was already in front of the enemy. On the 11th he had reached the village of Plan del Rio, from which place a cavalry picket fell back on his approach. On the 12th he marched three

\* General Scott to Mr. Marcy, April 11th, 1847. Executive Document, No. 60, House of Representatives, first Session of the thirtieth Congress, p. 929.

† Generals Twiggs and Pillow to General Scott. *Idem*, p. 939, 940.

miles and a half in advance to cover a reconnaissance, which was daringly made, and in which Lieutenant-colonel Johnstone was severely wounded. The reconnaissance, however, developed the general position of the enemy. He was found in force, and much stronger than had been anticipated, both in numbers and in position.

The course of El Rio del Plan, a small but rapid stream, is south of east for some miles above the village of Plan del Rio. The national road crosses it at the village, and, with various windings and turns, has a general direction to the north and north-west, until, at a point about three and a half miles from the bridge, it turns into the pass, and, in a direction south of west, continues on for more than a mile, and approaches near to the northern bank, along which it runs for some distance toward Jalapa. The road is a continual ascent for most of the distance.

The Mexican lines were in the angle formed thus by the road and the stream, and about a mile east of its salient. There the heights south of the road presented three ridges to the east, which descended gradually into rugged ground, broken into rocky ravines, and covered by thick chaparral. On the salients of these three ridges were batteries commanding the eastern extremity of the pass, and all the broken ground south of the road to the river. No. 1, on the right, rested upon the bank, which for some miles along the stream was precipitous and impracticable, being at least five hundred feet

in height. No. 2, the strongest and most advanced, commanded most of the approaches to Nos. 1 and 3, the ground in its own front, and a path by which an approach might be made from the main road without entering the pass. It had two supporting works in rear. No. 3 was nearest the road, and swept it from a short distance. In these three batteries were mounted seventeen guns of different calibers.

At the point where the road approaches the bank of the river was a battery of six guns, sweeping the pass for most of its length, and which could bear upon the roads leading to the batteries to the east. That which led to No. 3, next the road, was furnished, for most of its length, with a parapet for infantry, whence a plunging fire could be delivered upon a column moving along the pass.

This battery of six guns was at the base of Cerro Gordo, a conical hill which towered above the heights and forests of the surrounding country. Its sides were steep, and bare of trees, and encircled by two lines of abattis and breast-works. Upon the summit a redoubt had been constructed, mounting six guns. The main Mexican camp was upon the road west of Cerro Gordo, protected by a battery of five pieces of artillery.

By this disposition of batteries, the pass and all the ground south of the road and to the river were most strongly defended, and above all, Cerro Gordo was a commanding position, which rendered the possession of any separate work exceedingly haz-



ardous, if captured. In fact, the advance by the road or by the ground to its south was impracticable, in face of the lines, except by the loss of many men. On the north but few artificial obstacles were presented, but the ground was exceedingly difficult. The hills immediately on the road were steep and rugged, and covered with a thick tropical shrubbery, and along the north of the base of Cerro Gordo was a wide and deep ravine, which approached the road near the mouth of the pass, leaving between it and the hills a portion of ground, broken and covered with undergrowth, but practicable for infantry. In the space between the ravine and the road, immediately east of Cerro Gordo, rose the hill of El Telegrafo, of the same character as the main hill, but of less height. It was unfurnished with defensive works.

These defensive positions were occupied by Santa Anna's forces, numbering over thirteen thousand men. A portion were of the men of Angostura, a portion of the troops of the line which had been stationed in the city of Mexico, but many were new levies, raised by compulsion, and brought down from the country around Mexico and Puebla. These were almost entirely undisciplined, and unaccustomed to the use of arms. Nevertheless, confident in his strong position, in his powerful artillery, and in his fortifications, the Mexican general entertained strong hopes of success. He had issued proclamations calculated to infuse a heroic spirit into his men, and was loud in his professions of personal

devotion.\* All these have appeared ridiculous in the eyes of his enemies; but Santa Anna was speaking to a Mexican, not an American audience; and when it is remembered that in less than two months this same general had suffered an overwhelming defeat, had lost a large portion of his army by desertion, and disease, and in battle, had traveled six hundred miles, quelled a revolution, established his own power upon a basis of temporary strength, and had collected an army of such numbers without money, and without many of the ordinary resources for military preparation; that a portion of this army had, during the same period, marched over six hundred miles, and the remainder nearly three; when it is remembered that all this had been done, and the strong lines about the pass of Cerro Gordo had been constructed, surely it can not be denied that Santa Anna was a man of exceeding ability, thus to have created resources and an army out of materials apparently dispersed and indisposable. His energy was indeed surprising, and no natural difficulties were obstacles to him.

The position about Cerro Gordo was without water, and to supply it, a road was cut along the almost perpendicular bank of the Rio del Plan; but, to increase the supply, and save the labor of bringing it by that dangerous route, it was brought twelve miles by a ditch, down the gentle descent

\* Executive Document, No. 1, Senate, first Session of the thirtieth Congress, p. 259.

from the hacienda of Encerro. Being thus provided, with a free communication with the interior, the Mexican army might have hoped to remain behind the strong intrenchment while the invaders wasted their strength against them, and in a short time fell a prey to the yellow fever; for the country east of Cerro Gordo was all in the tierra caliente, and the immediate vicinity of Plan del Rio was the most deadly of all.

Upon his return from the reconnaissance, General Twiggs found Pillow's and Shields's brigades of volunteers at Plan del Rio; and as Patterson was still in the rear, and had reported sick, Twiggs assumed command of the whole force. He had spoken of an intention to assault the Mexican position on the following morning; but, finding the volunteers much broken down by the march through the hot country from Vera Cruz, upon consultation with their generals he concluded to defer his assault for one day. On the following, the 13th, he issued his orders, assigning to each division its particular duties.\* Whether these orders were issued to be executed, or were only set forth as the exponent of the good intentions of the temporary commander, they were of no effect; for Patterson, having heard of them, came up, and sent an order for Twiggs to suspend offensive operations until the arrival of the general-in-chief, or until he received orders from him. It was perhaps fortunate that

\* General Twiggs's Official Report. Executive Document, No. 1, Senate, first Session of the thirtieth Congress, p. 275.



it so happened ; for, although the general character of the Mexican position had been ascertained, yet General Twiggs could not have known much of the detail of the defensive works. The greater portion were not closely reconnoitered until some days afterward.

General Scott arrived at Plan del Rio on the 14th, and from the time of his arrival reconnaissances were pushed with diligence. Knowing his ability to force his way, and having no danger from the rear or on either flank, he was in no haste to compromise the safety of even a portion of his army by an assault, without proper knowledge of the locality. His attention was directed to the left of the Mexican position ; and, after close and daring observations made by the reconnoitering officers, it was deemed practicable to penetrate in that direction. The lines upon the right were also examined, and reconnaissances were pushed up the left bank of the Rio del Plan, which enabled a view to be taken in reverse of the battery next the bank. These occupied some days.

Meanwhile Worth had arrived at the Puente Nacional, fifteen miles in rear of Plan del Rio, on the morning of the 15th. He halted there during the day ; but having heard from an informal source that the battle was to take place on the following morning, that evening he dispatched an aid-de-camp to Scott for instructions. His division was under arms at twelve o'clock at night, ready to commence the march ; but, having been kept await-

ing the order until daylight, the aid-de-camp returned with General Scott's instructions to move up at leisure. Worth therefore remained quiet at the bridge until the afternoon of the 16th, when he set out and marched through the whole distance to Plan del Rio without a halt, where he arrived about midnight.

The plan of attack which had been determined upon included turning the Mexican left, and, for the purpose of opening a practicable road for artillery in that direction, on the morning of the 17th Twiggs's division marched from Plan del Rio. Turning to the right a short distance from the mouth of the pass, it pursued its way for some distance through the chaparral without interruption. In a short time, however, the movement was observed from the Mexican batteries, and their guns were at once opened heavily upon the flank of the troops. But the distance was great, the fire was plunging, and being partially screened from view by the foliage, and from shot by the inequalities of the ground, the troops were but little annoyed.

A party of Mexican skirmishers were in the mean time observed on the crest of a hill in advance and to the left of the commenced route, and Colonel Harney, who commanded General Smith's brigade (Smith being sick), sent up a company of the seventh infantry, under Lieutenant Gardner, to dislodge it. Gardner found himself engaged with a greatly superior force, but he held his ground until Harney sent up the rifles and first artillery to

his assistance. These forces soon cleared the crest of the hills, and, pursuing closely, came within range of the battery on the road at the base of Cerro Gordo, which opened with canister on the command, killing and wounding many men. The Mexicans made a stand on the hill of El Telegrafo, but the Americans advanced at once, unmindful of the flank fire, and carried it. The nature of the ground caused much confusion, and the regiments making the assault became separated. Lieutenant-colonel Childs, who commanded the first artillery, supposing that the action had just commenced, and that Cerro Gordo was to be stormed immediately, led his regiment down into the valley between the hills, and, commencing the ascent of Cerro Gordo, arrived with a portion of it in close proximity of the enemy's positions. The recall was, however, sounded, and he fell back, having lost thirty-two men in killed and wounded from the fire of the enemy in the intrenchments. In the mean time, Harney, fearing that Childs had become too seriously engaged to withdraw, and would require support, formed the rifle regiment and seventh infantry for that purpose. As the advance of Riley's brigade reached the position at the time, it was sent round the base of El Telegrafo to co-operate in the attack, should it be necessary to make one, by an advance on the left of Cerro Gordo; but Childs retired without further loss; and although the Mexicans came forth from their intrenchments in apparent pursuit, and mustered thick in the valley,

## II.—E



yet they quickly retired before the fire of a battery of mountain howitzers, which had been brought to the crest of the American hill, without any further demonstration of assault. So soon as they had retired, the guns of their battery on Cerro Gordo opened, overwhelming the opposite summit with bullets, and forced the American troops to keep close behind the crest.

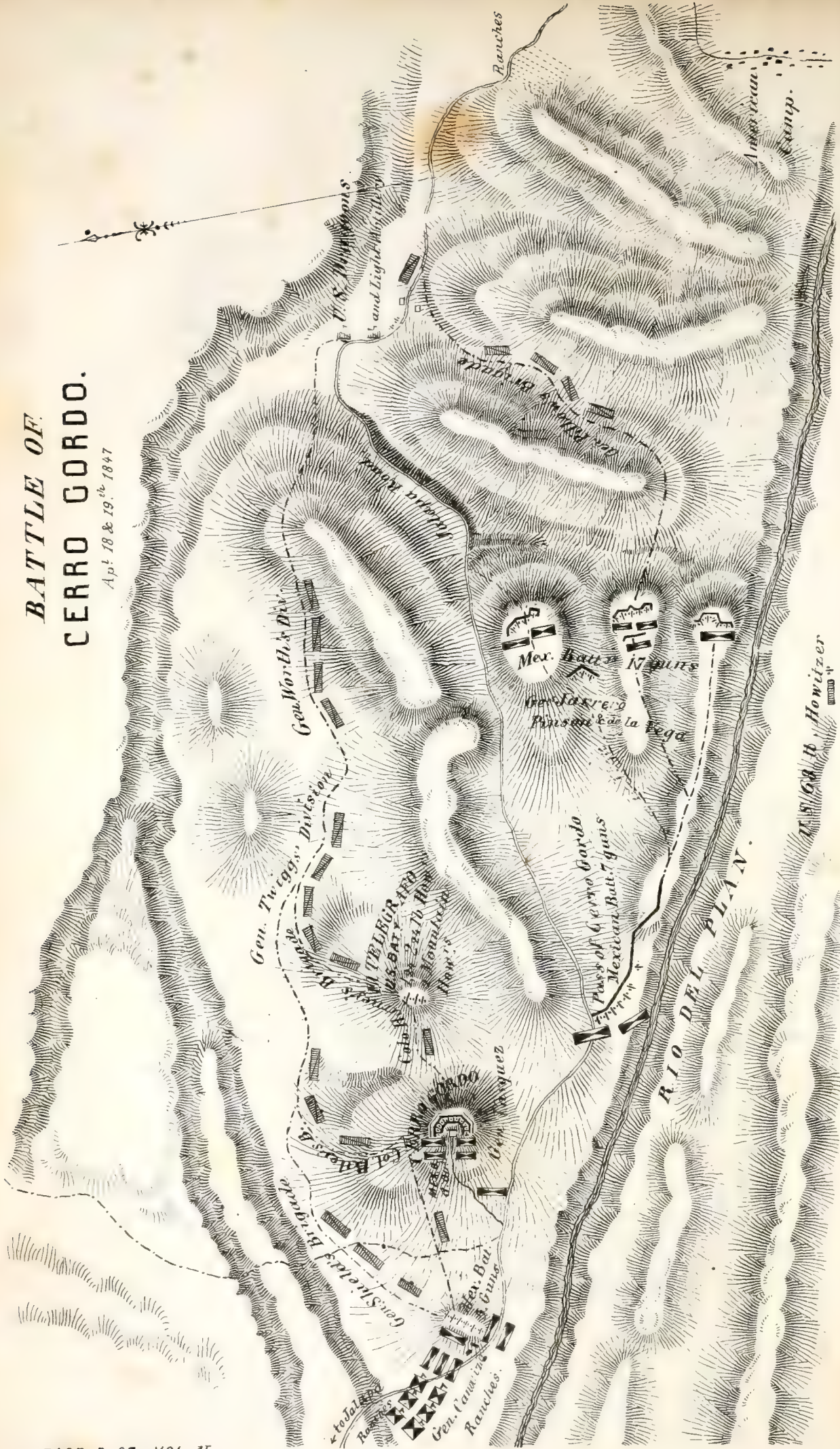
The firing having been heard at the camp at Plan del Rio, General Scott ordered Shields, with two regiments of volunteers, to move to Twiggs's support. Two twenty-four pounder howitzers and one twenty-four pounder gun were sent to be placed in position upon the summit of El Telegrafo, but the nature of the ground prevented their speedy arrival, and they were not at the foot of the hill until quite dark. To assist in the attack upon the batteries on the Mexican right, an eight-inch siege howitzer was ordered to be placed in position on the heights on the south bank of the river to enfilade battery No. 1. The tasks of locating this artillery were of exceeding difficulty. The road, which had been cut with much labor, for the purpose of turning Cerro Gordo, was impracticable for draught animals, and the guns had to be hauled by hand for much of the distance. The hill of El Telegrafo was exceedingly rugged and precipitous, and to locate heavy ordnance upon its summit required the exertions of a large number of men, after it had been brought to the base. Nevertheless, early on the following morning the how-





# BATTLE OF CERRO GORDO.

Apr. 18 & 19, 1847





itzers and twenty-four pounder were in battery, and opened upon the Mexican fort on Cerro Gordo. The eight-inch howitzer was drawn from the bridge at Plan del Rio, the entire distance, two miles and a half, by hand. The route was rugged, blocked up with rocks and palmetto trees, and of alternate elevation and declivity, yet the detachment having the work in hand toiled on during the night, gaining ground foot by foot, until, by nine o'clock on the morning of the 18th, that, too, was in position.

General Scott issued his orders for battle on the 17th. Twiggs was directed to continue his movement, and to take up a position across the National Road, to cut the retreat of the Mexican army toward Jalapa. Worth was ordered to follow the movement against the enemy's left at sunrise on the following morning. Pillow's brigade was to move upon the batteries upon the enemy's right, along a route which that general had reconnoitered, and to be ready, so soon as he heard the report of arms upon his right, to carry them. The cavalry and a field battery were to remain in reserve. The remaining field guns were to accompany their divisions. All corps were directed to pursue with vigor, until stopped by darkness or fortified positions, toward Jalapa.\*

Worth's division and Pillow's brigade moved early on the morning of the 18th from their camps at Plan del Rio. Upon arriving near the mouth of

\* General Orders, No. 111. Executive Document, No. 1, Senate, first Session of the thirtieth Congress, p. 258.

the pass, Worth halted for a time, and Pillow led his brigade—first and second Pennsylvanians and first and second Tennesseans—by a foot-path into the heights and thickets on the left of the road. Worth soon after took the route which Twiggs had pursued, having Duncan's battery at the head of his division.

Soon after the batteries on El Telegrafo had opened, Harney, having his whole force in hand upon the summit, the first artillery, rifles, seventh and third infantry (the third having been temporarily detached from Riley's brigade), sent the rifles into the ravine to the left, and formed the seventh and third infantry in line for the storming force, to be supported by the first artillery. At this time Santa Anna was upon Cerro Gordo in person, and he ordered up a body of infantry from the camp in rear. Seeing this corps approach Cerro Gordo, Harney did not wait for the commencement of an engagement by the rifles, but at once ordered the advance of the stormers. The heavy batteries upon the summit of the two hills in the while kept up the cannonade, but the American line descended the slope into the valley with rapidity, and, although exposed to a heavy fire, commenced at once the ascent of Cerro Gordo. It was steep, and as rugged as that of El Telegrafo; but, though out of breath, the troops of the whole command rushed on, carrying a line of breast-works and abattis some sixty yards from the foot of the slope, and, in disorder, continued on to the second

line, within a short distance of the summit. The Mexican troops within it, as well as from the fort higher up, poured down a continual stream of musketry, which, aimed too high, passed mostly over the heads of the Americans. A demonstration was made of descending the hill to meet the assaulting forces on their right; but it was quickly checked, and, after a short halt, the whole command moved forward in face of the incessant fire, and entered the work on the summit. The struggle for its possession was of short duration. The Mexican troops tried to engage in a hand to hand conflict; but General Vasquez, who commanded the position, was killed, other generals were captured, and the mass of the garrison broke down the slope toward the Jalapa road, while, with loud shouts and continued firing, scattered parties of the American troops pursued for a distance.

Riley, with the second infantry and fourth artillery, had followed the engineers, who were engaged in continuing the path around Cerro Gordo. From that hill the Mexican skirmishers had for some time kept up a heavy discharge upon his flank, and he ordered two companies to hold them in check. Twiggs, coming up for a time, ordered the remaining force to their support.\* Riley was already in rear of the hill, and, the movement having been commenced, he pushed on up the reverse slope, driving the Mexican skirmishers who cov-

\* Colonel Riley's Official Report. Executive Document, No. 1, Senate, first Session of the thirtieth Congress, p. 288.



ered it before him, and his advanced companies entered the work on the summit at the same time that the first brigade came over the crest from the front.

General Shields had led his brigade, consisting of the third and fourth Illinois regiments and a battalion of the New York Volunteers, to the right of the route followed by Riley, and, passing the hill, turned to his left, in the direction of the Mexican camp. Pressing forward through the tangled chaparral, he came in sight of the battery of five guns, supported by a large body of infantry and the cavalry of the Mexican army. While the volunteers were forming for the assault, the Mexicans opened a heavy fire from their battery, which severely wounded Shields and cut up his command. Colonel Baker, who succeeded him, ordered the advance. The foremost companies rushed at the battery, and, being supported by the remainder of the command in some confusion, succeeded in reaching it and capturing two of the guns.

From the position on the summit of Cerro Gordo, Riley had observed the Mexican battery, and had ordered the second infantry to proceed against it. Soon after, he received orders from Twiggs, who was still below, to move his brigade against the enemy's left.\* So soon as the command could be collected, in the confusion generally incident upon the capture of an important work, the remainder

\* Colonel Riley's Official Report. Executive Document, No. 1, Senate, first Session of the thirtieth Congress, p. 289.

of the brigade followed. The enemy, threatened by his approach and that of the volunteers, fled in confusion, and Riley's troops laid hands upon three of the guns. General Canalizo, who commanded the Mexican cavalry, led it off without striking a blow to cover the retreat, in spite of the orders of Santa Anna, who, infuriated at the bad fortune of the day, ordered him to advance against the Americans, even if he should charge up the ascent of Cerro Gordo itself.

During the continuance of the struggle about Cerro Gordo, Worth's division was in the path which had been followed by Twiggs. Duncan's battery, at the head of the division, had become entangled in the rocks, and blocked the road to the passage of the infantry for some time. Lieutenant-colonel C. F. Smith's light battalion, however, got in advance of it, was ordered forward, and moved to the support of the American right. Scott had come up with his staff from Plan del Rio, and remained for a time behind the hill of El Telegrafo. Worth passed on and ascended Cerro Gordo. Some apprehension was felt that the enemy would make another struggle for the point, and his infantry was therefore ordered to pass the battery in the path and ascend the hill.

While these events occurred, Harney had sent the seventh infantry down the southern slope of Cerro Gordo to occupy the National Road, and the captured guns upon the summit, having been manned by officers and men, had been served upon

the retreating enemy. So soon as he was beyond range, these guns were turned upon the line of intrenchments on the Mexican right.

There, Pillow had led his brigade to the attack, intending to assault what appeared to be a salient angle of breast-works between batteries Nos. 1 and 2, in two columns. The right was to be composed of the second Tennessee regiment, supported by the second Pennsylvania, and the left of the first Pennsylvania, to be supported by the first Tennessee. The second Tennessee regiment got into position, but the ground was rocky and covered with thick shrubbery, the path by which the approach had been made was narrow, and the remaining troops were not in place, when the enemy opened a heavy fire from all his guns which would bear, and from at least two thousand muskets. The batteries were defended by old troops of the Mexican line, with a re-enforcement of new levies, and they were commanded by men who showed great steadiness of purpose in battle, when compared with the majority of Mexican generals. Jarrero, La Vega, and Pinson, who commanded, set the example of brave conduct to their men; and although the eight-inch howitzer from the right bank of the river was opened upon their flank, and drove that part of the garrison of No. 1 which was exposed to its fire from the position, yet the greater number of the Mexican troops stood manfully to their post, and plied their guns and muskets vigorously. Unable to stand under the



fire, Pillow ordered the charge while his troops were still in disorder in the broken ground. Haskell's regiment, which was in advance, rushed on with a shout ; but the enemy's fire was heavy, the volunteers, badly disciplined, soon got into complete confusion, and, finally, having suffered severely in officers and men, the regiment fell back under the orders of the colonel, who led the retreat. The first Pennsylvania regiment had advanced to the position assigned to it on the left, but had not commenced the assault. The second Pennsylvanians were in confusion in the rear of the second Tennesseans ; and, while affairs were in this situation, to add to the difficulty, Pillow, who was crossing the ravine which extended between the positions intended for his right and left, was wounded. Colonel Campbell brought the first Tennessee regiment past the scattered parties of beaten troops, and, under Pillow's orders, commenced reforming the brigade for another assault. The first Tennessee regiment had seen service at Monterey, and was fairly disciplined ; but the other troops of the brigade were eminently raw, and the check which had been received shook the nerves of many, so that a large number fled from their colors to the National Road, upon which they came out at the point where the battery and the dragoons were stationed at the mouth of the pass in reserve.

Santa Anna, who had been upon Cerro Gordo at the commencement of the action, had given orders to Vasquez to defend the position to the last ; an

order faithfully executed, so far as that general personally was concerned. He had then proceeded to the right, and had witnessed the check of Pillow's attack, and returned to the left in time to see the capture of Cerro Gordo. There, after having given his orders to Canalizo, which that general had refused to obey, he saw that all was lost, and, mounting a mule taken from his coach, he descended the rocky path to the river, with a crowd of fugitives from Cerro Gordo, and, fording the stream, broke through a pass in the heights of the south bank, and took the road to Orizaba.

Pinson, Jarrero, and La Vega, seeing themselves cut off, Pillow's troops being still in their front, Worth's division and Harney's brigade in rear and on the left flank, on the right the precipitous bank of the river, and being annoyed by the fire of the captured guns from Cerro Gordo and the eight-inch howitzer, sounded a parley and hoisted a white flag. Worth, observing it from the summit of Cerro Gordo, sent Harney and Childs down to receive it. The Mexicans demanded terms, and stated their ability to escape by the river bank. The American officers refused to grant them; and, finally, after some continuance of the parley, the greater number of the force in the intrenchments laid down their arms, and surrendered unconditionally as prisoners of war. The prisoners taken numbered over three thousand, including five general officers, and were marched to Plan del Rio under the escort of Pillow's brigade.

After the Mexican batteries at the camp had been carried by Riley's brigade and the volunteers, and the Mexican troops in that quarter were in full flight toward Jalapa, General Twiggs came forward to that point and ordered the pursuit. Two of Taylor's guns had been brought round with great difficulty to the road, and the mountain howitzer battery soon followed. These pieces, with a supporting force of volunteers, were pushed on, and, only catching occasional glimpses of the flying enemy, pursued him as far as the stream of Dos Rios, near the hacienda of Encerro. Upon their arrival at that point, the Mexicans were found in some force on the opposite bank, and Taylor threw a few shot in their direction; but at this time he was without any supporting force, and soon fell back, leaving the Mexicans unmolested in their retreat.

The dragoons of the army had been left at the mouth of the pass in reserve, and for some time after the victory had been achieved were forgotten by all of the commanders. Scott had proceeded to the summit of Cerro Gordo, and was occupied in attending to the surrender of the troops on the Mexican right. Affairs were in the confusion often incident to a victory; but, finally, the dragoons were ordered forward, and Patterson, whose division had been broken up in the action, moved with them in pursuit. He passed rapidly over the same ground which Twiggs's scattered parties had traversed, overtaking that general at Corral Falso. Twiggs was ordered to advance with his division



as fast as it came up, and Patterson, passing him with the dragoons, halted at Encerro. One troop continued the pursuit some miles further, and captured several stragglers from the Mexican rear. The main body of Twiggs's division and Shields's brigade of volunteers halted that night likewise at Encerro. Worth's division remained in the immediate vicinity of Cerro Gordo. The general hospital was established at Plan del Rio, and at that place the general-in-chief remained with Pillow's brigade.

On the following morning Patterson entered Jalapa with the dragoons, followed by Twiggs's division and the volunteer corps which had advanced. Worth marched to within four miles of the city, and, having ordered the destruction of the captured arms, and paroled the prisoners of war, with the exception of a few officers who refused to receive it, General Scott came up to Encerro. He entered Jalapa on the morning of the 20th, in advance of Worth's division, and, after a few hours, sent that corps in advance toward Perote.

It was anticipated that resistance would be made at the strong castle near that town, and hence the rapid movement. On the 21st Worth reached Las Vigas, having passed through the difficult position of La Hoya, a pass as strong as that of Cerro Gordo, at which defensive works had been commenced and partially armed. The guns were destroyed. At noon on the 22d the division reached Perote, and took quiet possession of the castle; for Can-

alizo, who had passed in swift retreat on the 19th, had ordered General Gaona, who commanded, to retire with the small garrison which was in the place. Gaona, being without provisions to stand a siege or men to defend the place, quickly obeyed him, leaving an officer to turn over the property and munitions in the castle to the Americans.

There Worth's orders obliged him to halt.

The American forces present at the battle of Cerro Gordo, including those in reserve as well as those in action, did not exceed 9000 men. The loss in the two days' actions was in all, killed and wounded, 431, of which number 33 were officers.\*

The result of the battle was decisive for the time. The Mexican army was completely dispersed, with an indefinite loss in killed and wounded; 3000 in prisoners, including five generals; all of its artillery, forty-three pieces of different calibers, and seven standards. Indeed, in the words of the American general-in-chief, "Mexico had no longer an army."†

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The efficiency of extensive lines of intrenchment has long been a question among military men. Many great authorities might be cited on either side; and Napoleon, the greatest of all, says, that the assistance of the engineer *is an auxiliary which*

\* General Scott's Official Report. Executive Document, No. 1, Senate, first Session of the thirtieth Congress, p. 264.

† General Scott to General Taylor. Executive Document, No. 60, House of Representatives, first Session of the thirtieth Congress, p. 948.

*is never injurious, almost always useful, and often indispensable.* Nevertheless, the examples in history where lines defended by undisciplined troops, or where vigorously attacked by any troops better than the defenders, have availed any thing for ultimate successful defense, are very few, though sometimes, as at New Orleans, the exceptions have been so striking as to form the rule in the minds of many. Napoleon never failed in carrying any lines which he attacked; and other high authorities admit that they may, in general, prevent the passage of undisciplined soldiers but seldom when the assailants are the superiors in hardihood and discipline.

The battle of Cerro Gordo is illustrative of their efficiency and their uselessness. The lines of abattis and the fort on the summit of Cerro Gordo retarded the progress of the veterans of the second division scarcely one instant after the attack commenced. The lines upon the Mexican right checked the volunteers, and threw them into confusion. In these instances, however, there is no doubt that the lines upon the right were stronger than the position of Cerro Gordo; for the approach there was generally level or gently ascending, while the plunging fire from Cerro Gordo lost much of its accuracy and effect. Had the battle continued, too, the positions in that direction might eventually have been forced; for the approach upon battery No. 1, close to the river bank, where the main attack in that quarter should have been made, if



made at all, was sheltered from the other batteries, and the howitzer on the right bank of the river would have materially aided an assaulting force by its enfilading fire.

It has been seen, in the course of the narrative, that the movement from Vera Cruz was undertaken without knowledge of, or reference to the position or intentions of the enemy ; that the American army marched by detached divisions ; and that the full detail of the strength and position of the enemy were unknown until some days after the arrival of the advance of the army within four miles of him, at the village of Plan del Rio. The subject of the battle was therefore a new one to the general-in-chief upon his arrival at that point, and time was necessarily lost in reconnaissance. This, however, was not of ultimate consequence in the state of things which existed ; for, although it might have been expected that Santa Anna would gain advantage by the delay, yet Scott gained far more than he could by the knowledge of position and the arrival of Worth's division at Plan del Rio. The main advance by the right and the endeavor to turn the enemy's left were the consequences of the close reconnaissance which had been carried on on the previous day, which developed the strength of the positions, and the practicability, though difficult nature of the movement, which threatened a far less loss than to attack in front. But although it is a settled principle in war "never to attack a position in front

which you can gain by turning,"\* yet, had Cerro Gordo been defended by good and brave troops and by a skillful general, and had the Americans attempted it, as they did on the 17th, it would have been exceedingly hazardous for their success; for Twiggs's division was advanced to make the road, some four miles from Plan del Rio, and to within close vicinity of the enemy, and, besides its labor of construction, was obliged to fight its way alone. An enterprising enemy might very well have attempted, by moving out in force and falling heavily upon the division, to crush it at once, and beat the American army in detail. But the character of Mexicans for battle was known to the American general, and as all the rest which he could give his troops was required by the heat of the climate, the advance of this division, at first unsupported, was undoubtedly advisable.

In the order of attack issued by General Scott on the 17th, it was apparently contemplated that the retreat of the enemy by the Jalapa road should be intercepted before any positive attack should be made;† for Twiggs was to move on by the route which he was pursuing for that object, and nothing was said in the whole order concerning the attack on Cerro Gordo. Pillow was to attack the lines on the Mexican right so soon as he heard the report of arms; and as Twiggs's and Pillow's troops con-

\* Napoleon.

† General Orders, No. 111. Executive Document, No. 1, Senate, first Session of the thirtieth Congress, p. 258.

stituted the whole force of the army excepting Worth's division, it would appear that the latter force was the one which was intended should assault and carry Cerro Gordo, unless, indeed, it surrendered so soon as it was ascertained that the retreat of the Mexican force was intercepted.

It is quite probable that it was not practicable for Twiggs's whole force to have moved on by the route which he was cutting, exposing, as he must have done, his flank to the Mexicans on Cerro Gordo, before that position was carried; certainly it was not safe for him to attempt it, unless Worth's troops were in close vicinity, to threaten, if not to storm, the hill during the movement. It was not attempted on the part of General Twiggs to obey the order literally; and, although it does not appear that he gave any orders for Colonel Harney's troops to storm, yet he doubtless was quite willing that the chief honor of the victory should belong to his division, rather than the credit of having simply cut off the retreat. In consequence of the attack by Harney's troops before the movement to the rear was complete, the Mexican "force was divided, all of the batteries east of the hill being separated from the main body of the army encamped on the Jalapa road west of the hill."\* The victory was achieved; but, as the Mexican force was divided by the movements of the battle, it is diffi-

\* Lieutenant-colonel Hitchcock's Report of Prisoners, &c., &c. Executive Document, No. 60, House of Representatives, first Session of the thirtieth Congress, p. 1089.



cult to perceive how the plan which was sketched in General Scott's order was "executed,"\* for that order contemplated turning the whole position; and inasmuch as the whole Mexican army would have been compromised in the event of its successful execution, and the number of prisoners would have been greater, the victory would perhaps have been more complete. As it was, however, and as all the prisoners were liberated on parole, the attack on Cerro Gordo, whether caused by the desire of General Twiggs to take the chief glory of the battle, or by the impracticable nature of the movement prescribed by General Scott, did not affect the completeness of the victory, so far as its effect upon the main operations of the war was concerned.

The attack of the lines on the Mexican right was more positive than was required by the nature of the position or by circumstances; for, even had they been carried, they would not have insured the victory; wherefore it is hard to see, since the positions would have been gained if Cerro Gordo were carried, the necessity of attacking them seriously in front. General Scott was probably influenced by the desire of the volunteers to participate in the action. Whatever it may have been which caused him to order the attack in that quarter, the works proved to be much stronger than had been anticipated by either himself or General Pillow; and other than the effect of having a force

\* General Scott's Official Report. Executive Document, No. 1, Senate, first Session of the thirtieth Congress, p. 255.

in front of the works after Cerro Gordo had fallen, which prevented an escape of the troops there engaged, the attack was of little ultimate benefit.

As for the pursuit of the enemy, it was, from its nature, of but little effect, except as to causing the routed Mexicans some fatigue. The horde of letter-writers who followed in the train of the American army represented it as peculiarly terrific and destructive, and that the Jalapa road was encumbered with dead for many miles—a statement which I may be permitted to doubt, inasmuch as on the morning of the 19th not a dozen were to be seen along the whole distance from Cerro Gordo to Encerro. How could there have been, when the Mexicans had half an hour's start on the infantry and artillery, and nearly two hours on the cavalry?

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When, at the close of the session, the American Congress had passed the laws authorizing the raising of ten new regiments of regular troops, which had been urged upon its attention as of immediate necessity for the prosecution of hostilities, the President and the War Department put forth the most strenuous exertions to raise the troops, and send them en route for the seat of war. In the existing state of feeling in the United States, recruits were quickly obtained, and in a short space of time detachments were in motion for Brazos San Jago. That point had been selected as the rendezvous before General Scott left Washington, and

during the month of March many rumors of the dangerous situation and of the defeat of General Taylor's army about Saltillo had found their way to Washington, and it was deemed necessary to place a force in position to guard against the contingency of further disaster in that quarter, although implicit reliance was not placed upon the rumors.\*

In fulfillment of such design, General Cadwalader and some thousand troops disembarked at Brazos San Jago; but so soon as authentic news of the victory of Buena Vista had been received at Washington, the orders were modified, and the troops for service upon the different lines were apportioned.† It was intended to send re-enforcements of regulars and volunteers to increase Scott's marching force to about 20,000 men, and Taylor's aggregate to about half that number; and although various casualties reduced the number originally enlisted sadly, yet a sufficient force for filling the armies to the respective strength proposed was raised for the service in the United States.

When General Scott entered Jalapa, he gave immediate attention to getting up necessaries from Vera Cruz with what transportation he had, and made arrangements for continuing the advance. Having learned of Cadwalader's presence at Brazos San Jago, on the 25th of April he sent orders to

\* Mr. Marcy to General Scott. Executive Document, No. 60, House of Representatives, first Session of the thirtieth Congress, p. 1242.

† Mr. Marcy to General Scott, April 30th, and papers appended. *Idem*, p. 922.



that officer to send a part, if not the whole of his command to Vera Cruz, and to prevent the landing of any additional corps at that point, leaving to his discretion the number, if any, which it might be necessary to leave there for the defense or re-enforcement of the northern line;\* but it was not intended to await his arrival before commencing the movement into the interior, as time must necessarily elapse before he could receive the order, and the transportation of the troops would cause delay.

Worth, meanwhile, had thrown a brigade some eighteen miles in advance of Perote, to Tepeahualco, and was engaged in obtaining supplies from the surrounding country. He had much success, but was impatient to proceed while the effect of the battle of Cerro Gordo continued. Scott did not consider that the state of the depôts at Vera Cruz and Jalapa would permit him to order an immediate advance, and about the 27th of April learned that the mass of the new levies had been ordered to Brazos San Jago.

The proposed appointment of a lieutenant general had already caused the general-in-chief to entertain and express unfriendly feelings to the War Department, and in this location of the troops he found new cause of disappointment and vexation. But although he feared, in consequence of this diversion of force, that the army would be in no sufficient strength to march upon the capital, yet

\* Lieutenant Scott to General Cadwalader. Executive Document, No. 60, House of Representatives, first Session of the thirtieth Congress, p. 950.

about the 1st of May he had the advance in contemplation.

The volunteer division was first to move up to Perote and relieve Worth, who was to advance on Puebla. When the orders were announced, however, a difficulty was presented by the volunteers. Their term of service lacked but a month and a half of its expiration, and as the vomito was looked upon with dread, most of them were clamorous for discharge during their term of service at New Orleans, in order that they might pass Vera Cruz on their return before it became extensively prevalent. After some reflection, although the provision for the return of seven regiments to the United States took away from his immediate disposal many resources which were absolutely needed for the operating forces which remained, General Scott determined to discharge them from his army. The measure was gratuitous upon his part, for no provision of the law under which these troops came into the service expressed that they should be discharged in the United States; but moved, as was said, by considerations of "humanity and good faith,"\* he chose to deprive himself of present strength, and delay the operations of the war, to gratify the clamor of the volunteers. His order upon the subject was issued on the 4th of May, and soon after the different detachments moved in succession to the sea-coast.

\* General Orders, No. 135. Executive Document, No. 60, House of Representatives, first Session of the thirtieth Congress, p. 956.

The discharge of the volunteers left Patterson without a command, and he returned to the United States. Pillow and Quitman had been promoted to the rank of major generals in the regular service, to command the new regiments, and Pillow left to bring forward his division, if possible. Quitman, however, remained in command of four regiments of volunteers which were in service for the war.

General Scott still determined to advance as far as Puebla, and accordingly he ordered Quitman to march from Jalapa on the 6th, leaving one regiment of his command to constitute a portion of the garrison of that place, and to report to Worth at Perote, where another was to be detailed for a like purpose. Worth was ordered to move with his own division and the two remaining regiments of Quitman's in advance to Puebla.\*

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During the period of these operations of the army, the squadron in the Gulf of Mexico was employed in such service as remained there to be accomplished. The capture of Alvarado having at last been achieved, Commodore Perry turned his attention to Tuspan, the only garrisoned town which remained to Mexico on the Gulf. It was a place of no great importance, but in the absence of objects of greater magnitude, and as several guns which had

\* General Scott to Generals Worth and Quitman. Executive Document, No. 60, House of Representatives, first Session of the thirtieth Congress, p. 957.



been captured from the wreck of the American brig of war Truxton were there in battery, it was deemed advisable to attack it.\*

Tuspan was garrisoned by about 600 men, under the Mexican General Cos. The banks of the river upon which it stands were fortified by several batteries, all looking down the stream, and armed with seven guns, of which four were of heavy caliber, and of those taken from the wreck.

All the smaller vessels of the squadron concentrated under the island of Lobos on the 13th of April, and sailed thence for the Tuspan reef, at the mouth of the river, on the 15th, where they were concentrated on the 17th. On the following morning the bar was safely passed by the steamers and gun-boats, and about thirty barges having detachments from the different sloops of war and other vessels anchored outside, and four light pieces of artillery. The flotilla proceeded on up the river, the steamers and gun-boats passing and engaging the batteries, while the detachments landed and advanced to storm them. The resistance was short and desultory; and, having delivered a few scattering shot, which killed two and wounded eleven of the attacking force, four officers being included among the latter, the enemy fled, abandoning all his works and the town.

The detachments remained at the place for a

\* Commodore Perry to the Secretary of the Navy, April 24th, 1847. Executive Document, No. 1, House of Representatives, second Session of the thirtieth Congress, p. 1192.

few days, long enough to destroy the works and armament, with the exception of the guns and material which had belonged to the Truxton, which were brought off.

Early in the month of May Perry sailed to the south and east along the coast, and during the month visited and took temporary possession of most of the points of any importance in those directions, without opposition. From Frontera he sent an expedition to Campeachy, for the purpose of obtaining authentic information from Yucatan, which state, on account of its quasi independence of the central government of Mexico, was claiming immunity from the evils of the war.

During the cruise a partial examination was made of the River Coatzacoalcos, with a view of obtaining information of the practicability of constructing the ship canal across the isthmus of Tehuantepec,\* which project had already been spoken of as one of the policy of the United States, in case of the conquest and retention of Mexico. The information obtained, although valuable, was yet not very extensive.

By the 24th of May the commodore had returned to Anton Lizardo, and had in contemplation a second expedition against Tobasco, which town was in a state of preparation for defense when he had landed at Frontera.

\* Commodore Perry to the Secretary of the Navy, May 24th, 1847. Executive Document, No. 1, House of Representatives, second Session of the thirtieth Congress, p. 1206.

## CHAPTER III.

Military Contributions—Mission of Mr. N. P. Trist—His Quarrel with General Scott—Action of General Santa Anna at Orizaba—Of Mexican Government at the Capital—State of popular Feeling—Santa Anna's Departure from Orizaba—Worth's Command advances to Puebla—Affair of Amozoque—Occupation of Puebla—State of Things in that City—General Scott's Proclamation of May 11th, 1847—Opinion of the President of the United States—of General Santa Anna—General Scott advances with Twiggs's Division to Puebla.

WHEN the preparations for the attack on Vera Cruz had progressed to maturity, so far as the action of the authorities of the United States government at Washington was concerned, their attention was given to a measure which, it was hoped, would be, in effect, a powerful blow upon the enemy, and, at the same time, would relieve the United States from a great portion of the expense of the war. This was the raising of military contributions, which had been before suggested to General Taylor, and who had declined acting upon the suggestion for the reason that the country in the north of Mexico was too poor. As it was believed that this objection to the execution of the design did not exist at Vera Cruz and other larger ports on the Gulf, or along the route to the capital of Mexico, more positive action was taken upon the subject than had hitherto been pursued, and the orders for raising a revenue on imports into Mexico were issued.

On the 23d of March Mr. Polk directed the Secre-



tary of the Treasury to prepare and report "a schedule of articles of trade, to be admitted at such ports or places as might be at any time in military possession of the American troops, with such rates of duty upon them, and also upon tonnage, as would be likely to produce the greatest amount of revenue."\* Mr. Walker's report and schedule bore date on the 30th of March.† The latter was suited to the nature of Mexican commerce and the character of the inhabitants of the country, as well as the object of the tariff proposed to be established. Many difficulties would have been presented by each of these had the attempt been made to impose such a tariff upon foreign commerce entering into Mexican ports as that adopted in the United States, and, in consequence, the schedule proposed a mixed tariff of *ad valorem* and specific duties; and while it abrogated the high protective and oppressive duties of the Mexican tariff, threw open a door which had long been shut to foreign commerce, and apparently bid fair to afford a rich revenue to the conquerors. The opportunity for a fair trial of the tariff was not afforded so soon as had been anticipated, inasmuch as it could not, of course, have been so framed as to raise a revenue on imports where every road from the sea-ports was shut against small parties by the guerilla bands, which from the first hung upon the American lines of communication. Neither was the action of the Mexican

\* Executive Document, No. 1, Senate, first Session of the thirtieth Congress, p. 552.

† Idem, p. 553, 567.

authorities counted upon, who could take, as they did, immediate steps to lessen any revenue which might accrue to their enemy by legalizing the robbery of all goods which had paid duties to the American, and putting a stop to all trade with the ports—measures which they could very well consummate, as the most desirable and necessary articles had been prohibited under the Mexican tariff, and the inhabitants had been accustomed to depend entirely upon domestic supply.

But the tariff was considered as being well calculated to effect the proposed object, and, being approved of by the President, orders were issued for the blockade of such ports as were held by the troops or fleet of the United States throughout Mexico to be raised, and the measure to be carried into effect.\* These orders were received soon after the capture of Vera Cruz, and the uniform and systematic tariff was substituted for the temporary systems which had been established by the naval and military commanders. It continued in force throughout the war with Mexico.

In the letter of the Secretary of War of April 3d, 1847, in which were contained the instructions to the general-in-chief to cause the tariff to be enforced wherever such duty would from circumstances fall upon an officer of the army, were contained others of a more positive character, and

\* Secretaries of War and Navy to General Scott and Commodore Perry. Executive Document, No. 1, Senate, first Session of the thirtieth Congress, p. 560, 563.

which General Scott was directed to carry out in the following paragraph :

“ The contributions referred to” (from duties to be collected) “ are not all those which it may be proper to levy upon the enemy. As the Mexicans persist in protracting the war, it is expected that in the further prosecution of it you will exercise all the acknowledged rights of a belligerent, for the purpose of shifting the burden off from ourselves upon them. The views of the government in this respect were presented to General Taylor in a dispatch from this department of the 22d of September, 1846, a copy of which, so far as relates to this subject, is herewith sent to you, with the direction that these views may be carried out under a discretion similar to that given to him. The enemy should be made to realize that there are other inducements to make them desire peace besides the loss of battles and the burden of their own military establishments. The right of an army operating in an enemy’s country to seize supplies, to forage, and to occupy such buildings, private as well as public, as may be required for quarters, hospitals, store-houses, and other military purposes, without compensation therefor, can not be questioned, and it is expected that you will not forego the exercise of this right to any extent compatible with the interest of the service upon which you are engaged.”\*

\* Secretary of War to General Scott. Executive Document, No. 1, Senate, first Session of the thirtieth Congress, p. 563.



Upon the receipt of these instructions, General Scott sent copies of the letter, so far as referred to the collection of duties, to the governors of Vera Cruz and Tampico,\* and informed the department that he was too distant from the coast, and too much occupied with the business of the campaign, to charge himself with the execution of the instructions, as, indeed, he was to a greater extent than that of his action. The instructions contained in the quoted paragraph of Mr. Marcy's dispatch, referring to direct contributions for the support of the army, were very summarily disposed of by the general-in-chief in his letter of the 20th of May. At that time he was very much disappointed on account of the non-arrival of money, which had been expected for his commissary's and quartermaster's departments, and his ill feeling toward the authorities at Washington had become fully confirmed. In relation to the subject, he wrote:

"If it is expected at Washington, as is now apprehended, that this army is to support itself by forced contributions levied upon the country, we may ruin and exasperate the inhabitants, and starve ourselves; for it is certain they would sooner remove or destroy the products of their farms than allow them to fall into our hands without compensation. Not a ration for man or horse would be brought in except by the bayonet, which would

\* General Scott to the Secretary of War, May 7th, 1847. Executive Document, No. 60, House of Representatives, first Session of the thirtieth Congress, p. 958.

oblige the troops to spread themselves out many leagues to the right and left in search of subsistence, and to stop all military operations.”\*

Entertaining these views, the general-in-chief took no steps to carry out the instructions which he had received, and the policy of the administration was not enforced other than in the collection of duties at the ports. The supplies for the army were obtained as before, by purchasing at the prices of the country.

The full manifestation of the ill feeling of General Scott was brought about at this period by the arrival at his head-quarters of Mr. Trist, the newly appointed confidential agent of the United States. After the victory of Buena Vista, and the capture of Vera Cruz and San Juan d’Ulloa, the government at Washington had flattered itself that Mexico would listen to overtures of peace upon fair terms of accommodation,† and about the middle of April had arrived at the same conclusion which General Scott had expressed in his letter to the Secretary of War of April 5th, that with American commissioners at the head-quarters of the army, it would be quite probable that they would be met by proposals for peace from the Mexican government; and it was therefore determined to send an agent with full powers, who might take advantage

\* General Scott to the Secretary of War, May 20th, 1847. Executive Document, No. 60, House of Representatives, first Session of the thirtieth Congress, p. 963.

† Mr. Buchanan to Mr. Trist, April 15th, 1847. Executive Document, No. 52, Senate, first Session of the thirtieth Congress, p. 81.

at the propitious moment of any favorable circumstances disposing that government to peace.

It is rare that a diplomat at the head-quarters of an army is of any use, and generally, unless he is a man of great judgment and ability, and unselfish withal, he is a positive nuisance. Military men, when in command of an army, can, for the most part, pay attention to the duties which arise in relation to the question of peace or war. Certainly the chief action in relation to such question should be controlled by them. One great obstacle, however, is, with many, the desire of selfish aggrandizement. Diplomats are no less affected by the same desire, especially when with an army, and having charge of negotiations of peace or war. Though in outward seeming both generals and diplomats in the American service have cut down their pretensions to suit the republican character of their country, yet all the feelings still exist which have caused so many disputes on personal grounds between such functionaries. But the attempt to create a lieutenant general had been a signal failure, and as the administration, perfectly aware of the character and feelings of General Scott, did not choose to trust him with the conduct of the negotiations, a commissioner was appointed.

The selection was, however, exceedingly unfortunate. The doubt which still existed in regard to the disposition of the Mexican government forbade the appointment of public commissioners, or



of offering the mission to any of the prominent men of the nation ; and, again, it was by no means certain whether Mexican vanity would suffer any negotiations if the commissioner were of small repute. Moreover, it was thought that a knowledge of the Spanish language, and of the character of the people, obtained from association, was desirable. The conditions were in a measure satisfied by Mr. N. P. Trist, chief clerk in the State Department. He had been for a long time the consul of the United States at Havana, understood the Spanish language, and professed to understand the Mexican character. He was not very well known in the United States, and what was known of him had not been told in such a way as to show very much in his favor ; yet he was a man of considerable clerical ability, and the second officer in the State Department. The title of "chief clerk" is not, to be sure, very imposing, but with that of second in rank of the State Department, it might have been hoped to soothe the Mexican vanity by the dignity of the commissioner, and manifest all proper respect.

Another qualification which Mr. Trist possessed was devotion to the administration—at least he professed it, and he coincided in his appreciation of the character of the general-in-chief with the authorities at Washington, so long as he remained at that place. He was proposed as a proper man for the mission, and his claims were pressed by his friends upon the President, until Mr. Polk yielded

his own judgment, and commissioned him for the duty.

His powers were, however, strictly defined and very limited. He bore a letter from Mr. Buchanan to the Mexican minister of Foreign Relations, which was in answer to the last received from the Mexican government, and which informed it that a commissioner was at the head-quarters of the American army, in readiness to enter into negotiations.\* To provide for such contingency, he was furnished with a projet of a treaty, fully drawn out, containing the demands of the United States, and which he was to present to the commissioners on the part of Mexico, after an exchange of full powers. Discretion, to a certain extent, was allowed him in the amount of money to be paid, and certain modifications of the boundary demanded.† This projet he was directed to communicate, confidentially, together with his instructions, to General Scott and Commodore Perry.

Mr. Marcy wrote to General Scott on the 14th of April, informing him generally of the objects of the mission, and requiring him to transmit Mr. Buchanan's letter to the Mexican minister of Foreign Relations. He was further informed, that, under certain contingencies which would be made known to him by the commissioner, it would be his duty to suspend active military operations

\* Executive Document, No. 1, Senate, first Session of the thirtieth Congress, p. 36.

† Ibid., No. 52, Senate, first Session of the thirtieth Congress, p. 85.

until further orders from the department, or until recommenced by the enemy.\*

It was intended at Washington that General Scott and Mr. Trist should be entirely separate and distinct in their functions, and, had matters been fully explained at the outset, there would have been small reason for complaint or ill feeling. But, where ill feeling exists, it requires but little mystery to give rise to fault-finding. It soon occurred.

Mr. Trist passed quietly out of the United States, and early in May arrived at Vera Cruz. Before proceeding in person to the head-quarters of the army, he sent the dispatch for the Mexican minister, sealed, accompanied by a short note from himself, and the letter of the Secretary of War to General Scott, without any further explanation of his powers or his mission, or of the contents of the dispatch which was to be forwarded. In the absence of the full explanation, and being fully convinced that the paramount object of the cabinet at Washington was to sacrifice him, and being extremely mystified by Mr. Marcy's letter, particularly an interlineation, Scott saw in the whole proceeding an attempt to degrade him.† He had heard from private friends in Washington that Mr. Trist had no very high appreciation of his talents in any way, and the fact that the commissioner was a clerk in

\* Executive Document, No. 60, House of Representatives, first Session of the thirtieth Congress, p. 940.

† General Scott to Mr. Trist, May 7th, 1847. Executive Document, No. 60, House of Representatives, first Session of the thirtieth Congress, p. 960, and to the Secretary of War, July 25th, 1847. *Idem*, p. 1011.



the State Department was seized upon as the ground for his indignation. Upon the receipt of the papers, he addressed an answer to Mr. Trist, giving him, in succinct terms, what information he then possessed in regard to Mexican politics, which was exceedingly unfavorable to the objects of the mission. In the answer, he declared that the question of the suspension of hostilities belonged exclusively to the military commander, and inveighed bitterly against the conduct of the Secretary of War in attempting to degrade him, the general-in-chief of the army, by leaving the decision of the question to the chief clerk of the State Department.\*

Upon the receipt of the answer, Mr. Trist replied in extenso, and fully explained the objects of his mission, but in so arrogant and so insolent a manner that but little good could in reason have been hoped from the explanation. He undertook to constitute himself the aid-de-camp of the President, and to order the general-in-chief in his name, and, moreover, indulged himself in personal ironical allusions calculated in no way to cause any friendly feeling on the part of General Scott.†

The whole correspondence between these functionaries has been published and has become celebrated, not as setting forth any sound views upon the proper powers of the different officers, or as manifesting any particular zeal for the public service,

\* Executive Document, No. 60, House of Representatives, first Session of the thirtieth Congress, p. 960.

† Idem, p. 818-825.

but as a rich specimen of personal controversy and selfishness on both sides. The quarrel has passed into history as another, in addition to the many instances where the good of the service has been totally forgotten in the bitterness of personal feelings, and, like them, proves how dangerous it is for the fame of any public servant for him to permit his anxiety for his official rights and privileges to be paramount to that for the public good.

The controversy created deep personal hostility and prejudice while it continued, and, in the mean time, the letter which was to have been forwarded to the Mexican minister remained at the head-quarters of the army. The quarrel was well known when it occurred, and neither of the personages took care to conceal his feelings or the substantial contents of his ill-tempered letters from the army, with whose interests and welfare they were connected in so intimate a relation. However little this may speak for the prudence or good judgment of either, that the quarrel produced no serious effect upon the discipline of the army speaks loudly in favor of the sterling qualities of the officers and soldiers.

Mr. Trist followed the head-quarters, waiting for an opportunity, if he could find one, to commence the business of his mission.

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While this controversy was occurring at Jalapa, and General Scott was reorganizing his army and preparing for a partial advance, General Santa

Anna was at Orizaba, whither he had fled immediately after the battle of Cerro Gordo. He was engaged in making most strenuous exertions to raise another army, with which to stem, if possible, the torrent of invasion. His preferences, as boldly announced, were for a continuation of hostilities to the last, and probably for the reason that, if peace followed as the result of the battle of Cerro Gordo, lost under his direction, he might bid farewell to all anticipations of a future enjoyment of power. Wherefore, since the road to the capital was open, and he believed that Scott would immediately march upon it, he threw himself upon the flank at Orizaba, where he could collect the various guerillas of the tierra caliente from the jarochoes of Vera Cruz and the Indians of the valley of Oajaca, and with them keep up the war upon the communications of the American army. He could have had but slight hope of organizing a defense for the capital had the victory of Cerro Gordo been immediately pursued, and the guerilla system was all which remained to him in such an event.

He has stated that he sent orders from Cerro Gordo to General Gaona to put the castle of Perote in a state of defense, and to hold it until a relieving force could be assembled.\* Perote was a strong point, and, although it could not stop a march to the capital, would yet have been, if neglected, a rendezvous of the guerillas upon the American line, and Scott was not in sufficient force to block-

\* Letter of Santa Anna to the Mexican Minister of War from Orizaba.



ade it while his main body marched on Mexico. But most of the well-mounted guns of the fortress had been sent to Cerro Gordo, it was without ammunition, and with a very small garrison badly supplied. Whether Gaona ever received the order is very doubtful; but he was not of that capacity which is required to place a fort of the size of Perote in a defensive condition in a few days, even had the resources been nearer at hand. Indeed, such task was almost impracticable from the nature of things, for Worth was in rapid march, and, as has been seen, four days after the victory he was at the place and took possession. It is not at all probable that Santa Anna believed that it could be saved; but his order was most likely issued with the intention of relieving himself from the responsibility of having permitted the abandonment of so important a point, and of throwing it upon another; a weakness which is natural to many men, and, where military rank and power depend in any degree upon popular will, almost always apparent in the conduct of commanders similarly situated.

In the city of Mexico, the news of the disaster of Cerro Gordo was received with feelings of consternation. The army, which had occupied a strong defensive position, and which, it had been hoped, in spite of experience, would confine the invader to the tierra caliente, had dispersed before his fiery assault, and not a single barrier was left to his march to the capital. It was apprehended that he would soon advance; but, nevertheless, as he

was not immediately en route, no thought was entertained or expressed of submitting to terms or of suing for peace.

The news of the battle reached the ministry on the 20th. On that day it gave an account of it and its results to Congress, which was still in session. The government of Anaya declared that it intended to carry on the war, and never to make peace with the infamous government of the United States of the North. To enable it to carry out its intentions, Congress was called upon to grant it extraordinary powers, with a limitation which should prevent the entertainment of the negotiation of peace under the existing circumstances.

At ten o'clock that evening they were granted. The executive officers were endowed with supreme authority for any thing which might be necessary for the prosecution of the war, but the punishment of treason was proclaimed against any one who should commence negotiations. The law provided for the adjournment of Congress in case of the advance of the enemy, and for the establishment of a commission, to be composed of the oldest members of each deputation who might be present, upon which the principal legislative powers of the body were devolved in the event of the impossibility of a future assembly.\*

The policy which it was determined to adopt in the future prosecution of the war was to have re-

\* El Monitor Republicano, May 21st, 1847. Executive Document, No. 60, House of Representatives, first Session of the thirtieth Congress, p. 951.

course to the guerilla system, and in a few days the government granted permission to several commanders to raise guerillas and commence operations at once. Under such permission, General Salas, who had exercised the functions of president ad interim during the preceding year, was particularly noisy in his calls upon his countrymen. In a proclamation which he issued to the people of Mexico, inviting them to join his standard, he proclaimed as his motto, "*War without pity unto death!*"\* Many others proclaimed a no less vindictive spirit and policy. But, if the various attempts to arouse the evil passions of their own countrymen had the effect of filling the ranks of the different bands, they also had the effect, for a time, of exasperating the feelings of the American soldiery.

Having granted the extraordinary powers to the executive, and provided for its own retreat, in the face of the danger of immediate conquest by Scott's army, and of the invasion which was threatened by way of Chihuahua (for the most exaggerated accounts of Doniphan's expedition had been received in Mexico), the Mexican Congress continued its work of legislative defense. It authorized levies of troops en masse, the raising of money and means in any manner, and appeared as if seconding its grant of extraordinary power in general by giving it anew in detail.

Anaya commenced a show of action early in

\* El Monitor Republicano, May 21st, 1847. Executive Document, No. 60, House of Representatives, first Session of the thirtieth Congress, p. 951.



May, when he declared Mexico to be in a state of siege. General Bravo, the commandante general of the state, set to work organizing and drilling the national guard, and fortifications were commenced about the city.

But, notwithstanding the danger, politics engrossed no little share of public attention, for the Mexican president was to be elected on the 15th of May. The various parties, of course, took advantage of the state of things to make political capital; and, had the government been strong and well administered, the excitement which was aroused might have had a beneficial effect. The Puros were loud in their cries for war; and, as that was the popular measure, the priest party joined in with no less vehement protestations of patriotism. To prove their devotion in the crisis, several churches made loans to some amount to the government. In many parts of the republic the clergy issued calls upon their countrymen to rally in the support of the war in their clerical capacity, and in some instances a few warlike priests undertook to raise guerillas to act under themselves. The greatest enthusiasm prevailed, and the nation appeared to be fairly aroused. Frantic multitudes paraded the streets of the capital, shouting death to the Yankees; but, so far as these last were concerned, it must be remembered that at that time the enemy was some hundred miles distant, and they might have pursued a different course of action had he been close at hand in a threatening attitude.

In the turmoil of public excitement, the feeling of the populace, for a time, was against Santa Anna. Canalizo, too, who had previously enjoyed the soubriquet of the "Lion of Mexico," came in for a share of denunciation, and many of the leading journals called upon the government to place him before a court martial for his cowardice; but the clamors against the chief were unheeded by the government, and, by its express order, Santa Anna was retained in command of the army.

In the mean while the president general was importuning for money and means from Orizaba. He had succeeded in getting together some four or five thousand troops and a battery of artillery, including the corps of cavalry under General Alcorta, who had succeeded Canalizo, by Santa Anna's order. Having excellent means of information while he was collecting this force, he was early informed of the intention of the American general to discharge a large portion of his force, and of its actual discharge. Being then persuaded that the advance of the American army on the capital would be slow, and that, could he retain his power, he could place that city in a state of defense, he prepared to move in that direction.

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Quitman having arrived at Perote, in obedience to General Scott's orders Worth moved from that place on the 8th of May. The first Pennsylvania regiment and a company of the third artillery were

left to form the garrison of the castle. Worth had with him a small siege train, a section of Wall's field battery of twelve pounders, and a squadron of horse, in addition to his own division. Quitman followed the movement with his two remaining regiments and the second section of the twelve pounder battery on the 9th.

The movement progressed without any interruption or hinderance. It was believed that no enemy was in the front, and that Santa Anna was quietly laying at Orizaba, recovering, as he best might, from the defeat of Cerro Gordo. But, upon passing through the town of Nopalucan, Worth learned that he had marched through that place, at the head of a few hundred cavalry, on the 11th, en route for Mexico; but his movement was represented to have been extremely hurried, and his force was deemed so small that no thought of resistance was apprehended. On the night of the 12th the advance encamped at El Pinal, and, although the camp was alarmed during the night, yet no enemy was encountered. Worth pushed his march through the pass, where an abortive attempt had been made to impose obstacles, and on the 13th arrived at Amozoque, a town twelve miles distant from Puebla.

Being desirous of conciliating the good will of the inhabitants, and in no expectation of encountering an enemy, from that place he sent a communication to the Ayuntamiento of Puebla, requesting an interview in order to arrange his entrance



and occupation of the city. To await an answer and the arrival of Quitman's command, he remained at Amozoque on the 14th. His soldiers were occupied in cleaning their arms and accouterments preparatory to the entrance, which it was intended should be made in good style, when, about nine o'clock in the morning, a drummer boy, who had strayed in advance of the pickets, ran in with the information that the enemy was approaching in force.

It was hardly believed, but the staff officers mounted and galloped to the front, discovering the advance of a corps of from 2500 to 3000 cavalry. It was keeping to the north of the main road from Puebla, and, from the nature of the country, it was difficult to ascertain whether an army followed in its rear or not.

The long roll at once called the troops to arms, and the different regiments paraded in an incredibly short space of time. Taken by surprise, Worth was at some loss to imagine the intentions of the enemy; but he threw the guns of the siege train into battery at the angles of the plaza of the village, sent corps in advance upon the different routes to observe the approach, and awaited the development of his movements. Being apprehensive that the enemy might have Quitman's corps in view, as, after a short time, it was seen that he was turning the town, he sent Colonel Garland with the second regiment of artillery (acting as infantry), and two guns of Duncan's battery, on the road to the rear.

On coming out from the town, this detachment

found itself in sight of the long column of lancers, which was on its left flank, and not more than nine hundred yards distant. It marched for a mile or more along the road, in a direction approaching the path followed by the enemy, and, having obtained fair six-pound range, Duncan's guns were opened upon the advance. The leading regiment was soon dispersed by the fire, but the two immediately following formed columns of squadrons, and, wheeling to the right, made a demonstration of charging. The infantry of the American detachment took position in line to receive them, for the ground on its right was broken to a degree, and the artillery was on its left. Duncan, however, turned one of his guns upon the advancing column, and Captain Steptoe having come up on the left with a twenty-four pounder howitzer, burst a shell in its head, which scattered the whole force. The sixth regiment of infantry, which supported his piece, had thrown out a company of skirmishers, which captured a dozen or two prisoners. One or two Mexican officers had meanwhile been taken by the American staff officers while engaged in reconnaissance.

A portion of the Mexican force reunited out of range, and proceeded on in the direction of Quitman's approach; but Worth sent two regiments and the battery in that direction, and, after a short time, the cavalry disappeared in the hills. Quitman, who had heard the firing, had quickened his march, and was met soon after.

The appearance of the Mexican force and the affair of the morning, taken with the failure of an answer to his note to the civil authorities of Puebla, caused Worth to think for a time that his entrance into the city would be disputed. He therefore threw Garland's brigade three miles in advance of Amozoque, intending to march during the night, and to present himself before the city at dawn on the following morning; but during the night the expected answer arrived, and the movement was for a short time delayed. The mystery connected with the affair of the morning of the 14th was explained.

When Santa Anna had arrived at Puebla with all the force which he had collected at Orizaba, for his infantry had preceded him by by-roads, he had endeavored to arouse a spirit of resistance in the populace. He upbraided the Poblanos for their want of patriotism, and presented a very good argument to prove that they were not without the means of resistance, inasmuch as but three years before they had beaten him from the town, though backed by an army of 12,000 men. He failed in his attempt to arouse any positive opposition to the American advance, and his efforts were then directed to securing the retreat of his infantry and guns. Of the latter there were quite a number in position at Loretto, a fort on a hill to the southeast of the city. Believing that Worth would continue his march on the 14th, he had made his movement of that day with his cavalry, keeping out of sight



of the main road for most of the distance to Amozoque, with the intention of passing Worth and falling upon Quitman, over whose smaller force he might have hoped to gain some advantage. This would have compelled Worth to retrace his steps; and if it proved to be a brilliant affair, however useless it might have been in physical effect, it would have been a good thing to have been published in the capital at the time of the arrival of the vanquished general of Cerro Gordo.

He was quite as much surprised to find Worth at Amozoque as Worth was to find him in a hostile attitude, and, in consequence, he soon gave up his attempt at a battle. During his absence with the cavalry, the infantry and artillery of his command retreated from Puebla on the road to Mexico, and at four o'clock on the morning of the 15th Santa Anna followed the movement with the cavalry, having obtained nothing in money or means from the Poblanos except a partial remount, for he seized all the horses upon which he could lay his hands.

In the affair at Amozoque the Mexican loss in killed, wounded, and missing was reported at 80 or more, but it was doubtless exaggerated. The Americans lost none.

Worth arrived within three miles of Puebla about eleven o'clock on the morning of the 15th, and was there met by the Ayuntamiento of the city, in compliance with his suggestions. In his effort to carry out the instructions of the general-in-chief to

conciliate the inhabitants,\* as the Ayuntamiento desired fixed terms which should regulate the government and occupation of the city, Worth granted a substantial capitulation of nearly the same character as that which had been granted to Vera Cruz; a measure which, however much it may have been in furtherance of the policy of conciliation, was certainly of rather a strange nature, since Puebla was in no immediate state of defense, and as, in consequence of the convention, the American army was placed in a state of partial dependence upon the civil authorities and the people for quarters and supplies.

The terms having been agreed upon, the column marched into the city. During the delays which took place in the assignment of quarters by the civil authorities (and they were many and vexatious), the troops were formed in the Grand Plaza of the town, where, having stacked their arms, many, fatigued with their rainy bivouac of the previous night, and the hot march of the morning, quietly laid down upon the ground to rest. Santa Anna's appearance had disturbed their military toilet of the previous morning, and the rain and mud of the night before had not improved their appearance in the mean time. The Mexicans were exceedingly disappointed, and could not recognize in the plainly-dressed and muddy soldiers before them, the conquerors of their army on many a field,

\* General Scott to General Worth. Executive Document, No. 60, House of Representatives, first Session of the thirtieth Congress, p. 958.

against overwhelming strength in numbers and position. They had seen as dirty a soldiery before, and it was difficult for some of their sapient writers to conceive how valor could lie beneath so shabby an exterior. One indulged himself in expressing the belief that five hundred good men could have cut off the whole force as it lay in the Plaza. Nevertheless, the attempt was not made, either by the inhabitants in general or any select five hundred, and the quarters having been obtained after much delay, the troops were located in different parts of the city.

Puebla was thus quietly occupied; but, although no outbreak occurred among the inhabitants, yet their disposition was undoubtedly hostile. The various civil authorities were dilatory in furnishing the requisitions made upon them, small as they were, and consumed much time in stickling for minor points, which, it was claimed, had been conceded to them by the convention for the surrender. The establishment of a *depôt* went on slowly; for, although in the midst of a populous and fertile country, and the *haciendados* of the vicinity were quite willing to sell their produce to the American army, yet Worth was without sufficient cavalry with which to support the necessary semblance of compulsion in gathering it in.

Meanwhile various rumors were rife, and kept the troops of the garrison in a state of annoyance. A few soldiers, who had wandered into the suburbs of the town, became intoxicated, and were mur-



dered by the leperos, which proved the disposition of that class of persons at least. It was ascertained beyond a doubt that several individuals, priests and others, were endeavoring to foment an insurrection, and Worth proceeded to take precautionary measures for safety; and, indeed, considering the state of things, ordinary prudence demanded no less; for although, as a general thing, "a city of eighty thousand inhabitants is not to be taken by the collar,"\* yet here one of that population had been taken and occupied by four thousand troops; and when it is remembered that Puebla is only three days' march from the capital, and that Mexico had enjoyed a respite of a month to recover from the effect of the disaster at Cerro Gordo, it certainly will appear that it was necessary to be careful.

But the propriety of the dispositions which were made for the insurance of safety may be questioned; for while one portion of the command occupied the hill of Guadalupe, Fort Loretto, and the southeastern quarter of the city, one brigade, two field batteries, and a squadron of horse were shut up in a dilapidated building, half convent and half state prison, on the northwest, which commanded nothing, which had difficult egress, and which was proof against nothing. By this disposition Worth had the entrance and egress of the main road to the capital in his possession, and under his observation for a short distance, but his

\* Napoleon.

forces were divided, and, in case of an outbreak, communication between the corps would have been difficult, if not impracticable. The troops were, moreover, in unhealthy quarters, and the sick list soon began fearfully to increase, and this disposition of the troops continued for some weeks.

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On the 11th of May General Scott issued a proclamation to the Mexican people from Jalapa, which, on account of its ability and excellence of composition, and apparent adaptation to the state of Mexican affairs, called forth the admiration of all parties in the United States, and was well received by the people of those portions of Mexico occupied by the American troops. It presented every thing which might have been hoped to serve as inducements to Mexico to make peace, and much to influence the approaching Mexican election in favor of the friends of such a measure.\* It received the almost unqualified approbation of Mr. Polk and the Secretary of War. The only thing which was found in the whole paper not strictly consistent with the facts and the true policy of the United States was contained in the explanation of the causes of the war; and that there was but that one exception, would make the paper remarkable among the proclamations of military commanders, which in general are not famous for veracity of record, especially when issued to the enemy.

\* Proclamation. Executive Document, No. 60, House of Representatives, first Session of the thirtieth Congress, p. 971.

In the explanation it was made to appear that the war had been commenced on the part of the United States, in order to put a stop to the monarchical schemes of Paredes, and in that connection it was said that, when he had gained power in Mexico, having overthrown the patriotic government of Herrera, "Duty, honor, and dignity placed us under the necessity of not losing a season of which the monarchical party was fast taking advantage. As not a moment was to be lost, we acted with a promptness and decision suited to the urgency of the case, in order to avoid a complication of interests, which might render our relations more difficult and involved."\*

The view presented in this paragraph was in opposition to the avowed action of the American government, as it had all along professed to have been forced into action by the attack of the Mexican army upon General Taylor. In speaking of the proclamation in regard to that point, in his letter of June 15th to General Scott, Mr. Marcy remarked, "As it could not have been your design to enter into a full discussion of the causes which led to the war, it is not to be taken as an authoritative exposition of the views of the executive in this respect, but he regards it as a document containing '*topics and sentiments the most likely to find a response in the bosom of Mexicans, and to promote the cause of justice, moderation, and peace.*' Such

\* Proclamation. Executive Document, No. 60, House of Representatives, first Session of the thirtieth Congress, p. 972.



were properly the scope and end of the proclamation, and most ably have they been carried out.”\*

General Scott had issued the proclamation at the instance of several Mexicans of standing and influence about Jalapa. One of their number had composed it, under his directions, in original Spanish.† Whether the motives of these persons were to influence the coming elections in any manner favorable to themselves, or to favor the interests of peace by assisting in the appeal of the American general to their countrymen, is doubtful; but as, after it had been finished, General Scott saw no American objection to the paper, he issued it. Numerous copies were sent out for distribution; but Santa Anna captured the courier who was carrying a package to the capital, and did not fail to observe that the document had been originally written in Spanish, and by a Mexican.‡ This fact was published, with bitter denunciations against the traitor who had been so subservient to the invaders; and the accompaniment of treason thus fastened upon the proclamation completely neutralized any effect it may have had in the capital, if one can form a judgment from after events.

Having finished his arrangements for maintaining his army, so far as he deemed it practicable, on the 21st of May General Scott marched from

\* Mr. Marcy to General Scott. Executive Document, No. 60, House of Representatives, first Session of the thirtieth Congress, p. 975.

† General Scott to Mr. Marcy, May 20th, 1847. *Idem*, p. 964.

‡ Letter of Santa Anna to the Mexican Minister of War and Marine, from Puebla.

Jalapa with the cavalry of the army and General Twiggs's division. Colonel Childs was left in command of that place with a garrison of the first regiment of artillery, and the second of Pennsylvania volunteers. On the 28th Scott entered Puebla with the cavalry. Twiggs arrived on the following day, at the moment when the garrison had been turned out, on account of a rumor that General Bravo was at hand with an army of 20,000 men, and about to attack the city. It is true, no one who had seen Bravo or the first of his 20,000 men could be found, and the absurd rumor, like many others of the previous days last past, soon proved to be false.

The whole army having been concentrated, false alarms became less frequent.

## CHAPTER IV.

Return of Santa Anna to Mexico—Mexican Politics—Santa Anna's Resignation of the Presidency—Action of the Mexican Congress—Withdrawal of Santa Anna's Resignation—Preparations for Defense—Opinions and intended Action of General Scott—He orders the Abandonment of Jalapa—Organization of Guerillas on the Line of American Communication—Colonel M'Intosh marches from Vera Cruz—Affair of Paso de Ovegas—General Cadwalader's Advance—Affair of the National Bridge—Affair of La Haya—General Pillow's Advance—Junction with Cadwalader—Arrival at Puebla—Naval Expedition against Tobasco.

WHEN Santa Anna retired from Puebla, after the affair at Amozoque, he fixed his head-quarters temporarily at the village of San Martin Tesmalucan, within twenty-five miles of the city. Affairs of a political nature, however, required his immediate presence at the capital, and thither he proceeded, and entered on the 19th of May. His reception was by no means cordial, so far as the populace was concerned, and, as is usually the case with beaten generals, many of the same partisans who had hitherto been loudest in his praise, were most noisy in opposition. There were no trophies of victory from Cerro Gordo, and the want of these, and its proximity to the capital, forbade the attempt at any mystification of the public in regard to the real results of the conflict, such as had been successfully practiced after the battle of La Angostura. But as the election for president had resulted in no choice, for few of the states cast their



votes for the same person, Santa Anna, having resumed the duties of the executive, had an opportunity of securing his power in the interval. The result of the elections had doubtless been brought about by the intrigues of his partisans, which had been in a manner arranged before he left the capital for Cerro Gordo. The President at once set about securing his popularity. His first step was to abrogate the law restricting the freedom of the press, and he declared as his reason that his sole wish was to act according to the dictates of popular opinion which were expressed through it. He found great difficulty in retaining any ministry, or in carrying out any public measures. The Mexican Congress was only half friendly to him, and was powerless except to the extent of conferring nominal extraordinary authority upon the executive, which it had already given to the president-substitute during Santa Anna's absence.

This body had been engaged from time to time, when not excited by the occurrence of some new catastrophe or pronunciamiento, in remodeling the Constitution. The product of its industry was proclaimed and recognized by the functionaries of the government soon after Santa Anna's return. He soon took a conspicuous part in the ceremony; but all his protestations and demonstrations of subserviency to the popular will were insufficient, for a time, to uphold his waning popularity.

Before he had arrived at Mexico, he had taken steps to increase the force in the vicinity of the

capital, and parties of troops, raised by his adherents, were already in march, and concentrating for its defense. Yet the feeling of the inhabitants was strongly opposed to any resistance being made to the invaders, as they feared the destruction of life and property; but, at the same time, the expressions of hatred and enmity against the North Americans were as strong as ever.

Santa Anna endeavored to push the erection of the fortifications, but his opponents took advantage of the public feeling against resistance to thwart his measures. Their intentions were probably confined to the deposition of Santa Anna, although several of the leaders of the opposition were accused of corresponding with the American general, with a view of delivering up the city and country into his hands. The accusation may have been, and probably was, a weapon of assault made use of by the Santanistas.

Whatever views may have been entertained by the factions, and they were numerous, the action of all combined produced a state of most unmitigated anarchy. The government was paralyzed, Congress did nothing, the factions plotted one against the other, the generals quarreled among themselves and with the government, the newspapers abused all parties and each other, and, more than all, the North Americans, in which sentiment alone they were sustained by the quarrelsome leaders of the factions, who agreed in that opinion only; and probably in that, because it allowed them an

opportunity for promulgating their vehement declarations of patriotism.

Santa Anna, however, was possessed of the extraordinary powers conferred upon the president-substitute, and soon began to act. He first seized Almonte, who had become his enemy in one short year, and who was busily employed in intriguing against him, and shut him up in the prison of San Jago. Arista, who was also figuring in conspiracy, was sent off to Acapulco. Bustamente, also an intriguer, was ordered to command the department of Sinaloa; and Ampudia, another in the list, though not very conspicuous, was sent, under guard, to Cuernavaca. Having thus got rid of several leaders, on the 29th of May Santa Anna resigned the presidency. His example was soon followed by several generals, the veteran Don Nicolas Bravo at their head, and all appeared in irretrievable confusion.

How far the measure of his resignation was one of policy on the part of the president to induce the people and Congress to come to his support, having broken up the intrigues of the factions as much as possible, and sent off their leaders, can be imagined from results; but, in his letter of resignation, Santa Anna professed to be governed only by his convictions of what was necessary for the republic. He stated that he knew that the enemy dared not advance upon the capital with the means then at his disposal, unless aided by a revolution within its walls; that he knew that his downfall was the



object of the opposition, and that he felt himself to be the obstacle to the prosecution of vigorous resistance to the invaders. He therefore was called upon to sacrifice himself for the good of the country, and to resign, since all the efforts which he had made to avert her misfortunes had resulted only in the virulent opposition of his and her enemies. He left the power with which he had been intrusted in the hands of Congress.

It was not seen fit to add publicly to the letter of resignation that, as all the leaders and chief organizers of the opposition to himself were made away with, if Congress wished to adopt any other system than that which he prescribed, it would have to commence *de novo*, without leaders and without system. Such action the result of the presidential election had shown to be improbably successful, if not impossible, and the natural course of things might have been expected, that Congress, which numbered many partisans of the resigner among its members, would decline to accept the resignation, and beg him to retain the power which would thus be confirmed.

Nevertheless, Congress was not exceedingly quick in acting upon the resignation, and appearances were, for a short while, in favor of its acceptance, notwithstanding the difficulties which were to be apprehended. In this state of things, having quieted the generals, and his old adherent, Don Juan Alvarez, being close at hand, in march for the city, with a large force of his Pintos of Oajaca,

and other re-enforcements daily arriving in the capital to swell the army under his command, on the 2d of June Santa Anna withdrew his resignation. In his letter of withdrawal, he chided the Congress for its dilatory action, which left the republic without a defender, and forced upon him the duty of resuming the exercise of the weighty functions of the executive. Setting forth the necessities of the case, the prayers and importunities of the most influential personages in the city, and of the officers and soldiers of the garrison, in excuse for his apparent inconsistency, he professed himself in readiness to make another sacrifice to the good of his country, of his "*pride*," and to defend the capital from the enemy, who he then knew, as he said, could advance from Puebla at any moment.

Soon after, the Congress so far recognized the necessity of his continuance in power as to appoint the 15th of the following January as the day upon which the official votes for president should be counted; and as no further action could be taken in the selection until that time, the decree which appointed the day, in fact, created Santa Anna dictator until the next year.

Being thus legally secure, having made away with his enemies, and with re-enforcements rapidly concentrating, he went on with the work of fortifying the city. The battalions poured in from the different cities and states of the republic; each sent its guns to contribute to the defense; others

were in the process of casting at a newly-established foundry in the neighborhood of the capital; and by the end of June the Mexican president had at his disposal for defense over 25,000 men, and sixty pieces of artillery of different calibers.

The usual great difficulty of Mexican governments was still an obstacle, and money could hardly be raised. The scheme of sequestrating Church property had been abandoned, and was impracticable. Direct taxes and contributions availed but little, and were collected with difficulty. In the emergency, Santa Anna seized upon every thing which the government had at its disposal, and turned it into money, sometimes at ruinous losses. The mint was farmed out to foreign merchants, and bonds to an enormous amount were sold for a tittle of their value. With resources raised from these and other means, by the assistance of Mr. Mackintosh, the English consul, Santa Anna contrived to raise funds for current expenses. Grati- fied by the energy shown in preparation, by the strength of the works in the progress of erection, and the display of great numerical strength, the population of the capital again turned round, and supported and applauded Santa Anna.

The information which was received in Mexico of the strength and condition of the American forces was exceedingly accurate, but not so the exploits of the guerillas upon the road from Vera Cruz to Puebla. These were magnified enough in the accounts of the performers, and the government took



good care that they should lose nothing in the publication. And while the preparations for defense were in progress, different movements of troops were ordered, all demonstrating attacks upon the flanks of the American line of operations. The most considerable of these was the location of Alvarez's corps at Atlixco, near Puebla, from whence he was to break up the communication with Vera Cruz. These movements were all set forth as so many proofs of the activity and bravery of the defenders of the capital. With a comparatively stable government, for Santa Anna had at last succeeded in forming a cabinet, and in the absence of pronunciamientos for the time, the elastic spirits of the Mexicans again rose to confidence, and they flattered themselves that the final struggle would be successful, and that northern ambition would meet with an overwhelming defeat in its attack upon their ancient capital.

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The progress of these events in Mexico was observed with some attention by the American general-in-chief at Puebla, and he was not without hope that the state of things attendant upon Santa Anna's resignation of the presidency (of the sincerity of which he at first entertained no doubt) would bring about the election of a president favorable to the interests of peace. Such an opinion he expressed in his letter to the Secretary of War of the 4th of June; but he then still entertained the deepest hostility to Mr. Trist, and complained bitterly

of the flank battery which was established against him in the person of the commissioner.\*

In the existing state of affairs he contemplated an advance upon the capital, and as he had determined to make his army a self-sustaining machine, in order to increase the strength of the head of his column, he concluded to withdraw the garrison from Jalapa, and to leave the country between Vera Cruz and Perote open to the operations of the enemy. On the 3d of June an order to this effect was sent to Colonel Childs,† and soon after a train of ambulances and wagons was sent from Puebla for the removal of the hospital from Jalapa to the Castle of Perote. Childs was directed to move up to Puebla so soon as the removal had been completed, and only to await the arrival of a party of recruits, if it had not passed before he was ready to abandon the post. This party General Scott had some idea was on the way, but he was entirely ignorant of the advance of any considerable force; for although, so soon as the news of the victory of Buena Vista had been received at Washington, the War Department had caused the different detachments to be sent to Vera Cruz, yet General Scott remained ignorant of its action. The bearer of the dispatches which contained the information had started to come through from Vera Cruz with an incompetent escort, and had been murdered on the road.‡

\* Executive Document, No. 60, House of Representatives, first Session of the thirtieth Congress, p. 993.

† Idem, p. 997.

‡ General Scott to the Secretary of War, July 25th, 1847. Executive Docu-

In consequence, General Scott believed himself abandoned to his own resources.

In the mean time, troops continued to arrive by detachments at Vera Cruz. Some had previously marched in escort of small trains, and came through to Jalapa, and even to Puebla, without serious opposition. But by the early part of June the guerrillas of the tierra caliente were fully organized. Santa Anna had turned his attention to that branch of the Mexican service while at Orizaba, and as he was well known in the proposed theater of operations, and as the inhabitants were adepts in the business, he had experienced no difficulty in getting affairs in train for the prosecution of that system of warfare. One of the principal leaders of the parties was a Colonel Cenobio, who had been for a series of years the well-known chief of an organized band of robbers on the route from Vera Cruz, and, from the vicinity of his head-quarters to the hacienda of Mango del Clavo, it was suspected that during the whole period he had had an understanding with Santa Anna. This person was intrusted by the Mexican president with the management and preparation of the service when he left Orizaba. As the attacks on the American trains offered booty to the guerilleros as well as advantage to the Mexican cause, there existed no obstacle to increasing the number of the robber bands to any required strength. The whole popu-

ment, No. 60, House of Representatives, first Session of the thirtieth Congress, p. 1012.

## II.—I



lation of the tierra caliente was ready to serve, and various Spaniards came from Havana to act as chieftains, while others sprung up in the country.

The field of action was not confined to the vicinity of the main route from Vera Cruz. Wherever any American force offered a pretext, there were found guerillas, for if they could obtain nothing from their enemy, they could at least live at free quarters upon their own people, on the score of patriotism. The freedom which the Mexican inhabitants of Vera Cruz enjoyed, gave them opportunities of acquiring information of the movements of American troops, and of the contents of their trains, and, as the guerilla chiefs had their spies about the town, the information was received by them before the departure of any convoy.

On the 4th of June Brevet Colonel M'Intosh marched from Vera Cruz with a command of two companies of mounted and one of dismounted dragoons, and six of infantry of different regiments. The troops, officers and men, with few exceptions, were recruits who had seen no active service, and had but little discipline. The train which accompanied the command was of one hundred and twenty-eight wagons. The whole number of teamsters and wagon-masters were perfectly raw, the draught mules and horses were unbroken and weak, the wagons were heavily laden and not of the best manufacture.\*

\* Colonel M'Intosh's Report. Executive Document, No. 1, Senate, first Session of the thirtieth Congress, Appendix, p. 5.

Considerable delay occurred in starting the command, on account of the difficulty of landing a quantity of specie which was to accompany the convoy, and the march only extended three miles from the point of starting on the first day. The road was of deep sand ; many of the weaker teams stalled during even this march, and but few reached the halting-place. The great body of the train was strung out from the Rio del Medio to the village of Vergara, and men and animals for the most part passed the night without water or food. Being thus broken down the first day of the march, the progress of the command on the succeeding days was slow.

On account of the specie contained in the train, the column had been marked by the guerilleros, and a chieftain by the name of Don Jose Maria Cobos had made arrangements for attacking it.\* He had taken post with his main force at the Puente Nacional, but sent a detachment, under Don Climacio Rebolledo, in advance to annoy the movement.

On the morning of the 6th four hundred pack-mules joined the American train, having come up from Vera Cruz under feeble escort. Soon after, upon entering the first broken country, Rebolledo's people attacked the command from front, rear, and flanks. The attacks were not very vigorous or decisive, but, such as they were, they had the effect of throwing the whole train into confusion. Many

\* Don Jose Maria Cobos's Report to the Mexican Secretary of War and Marine.

teamsters fled at the first crack of a musket, and it required all the exertions of the officers to keep the recruits in their place or positions. After a time; however, confidence was restored, the enemy was prevented from a near approach, and the march was continued. The train gave a great deal of embarrassment. What with skirmishing, and the delay occasioned by the breaking of wagons, no more than nine miles were made on that day, and the wagons were not parked until some time after dark. The Mexicans had succeeded in killing and wounding twenty-four soldiers of the escort, besides a large number of drivers and arrieros of the pack-mule train, who had either fallen under the volleys, or had been murdered in the bushes where they had sought refuge on the approach of the enemy. How much loss was suffered by the guerilleros was, and is, quite uncertain, but, as usual in such cases, it was reported to have been heavy.\*

In the confusion of the affair, twenty-four wagons had broken down, or their teams had given out, and were left on the road. The enemy managed to rob some portion of their contents, and but few of the wagons were brought up to the camp.

The result of the affair convinced M'Intosh that his force was entirely insufficient to afford adequate protection to the train, increased as it had been, and he therefore sent back an express to Vera Cruz, giving information of his condition to the senior

\* Colonel M'Intosh's Report.



officer at that place, and requesting re-enforcement.\*

On the following morning he moved in advance to Paso de Ovejas, where he halted to await its arrival. The movement was not effected without annoyance, for the guerilleros hovered on the flanks, and poured in a volley upon every opportunity. The effect, however, was only to wound one man.

The command had not been a day in camp when it was found that another danger was threatened; for, on account of circumstances partly beyond control, and partly arising in the culpable negligence of officers and quarter-masters, the troops had but small store of provisions, and the animals were without forage.† In the mean time, the enemy continually made his appearance, and amused himself by firing at long range into the camp, though his parties retired before any approach of the troops in force. But, what with his desultory practice, the broken-down train, the want of forage, and the short allowance of provisions, affairs at Paso de Ovejas were in the utmost confusion. On the 8th a portion of the pack-mule train was sent, under escort of those dragoons whose horses were yet fit for service, to bring up subsistence from the rear, and other letters were sent to Vera Cruz asking for aid.

Brigadier-general Cadwalader, who had arrived

\* Colonel M'Intosh to Brigadier-general Cadwalader, June 6th. Executive Document, No. 1, Senate, first Session of the thirtieth Congress, Appendix, p. 13.

† Reports. Idem, p. 14, 15, 16.

at Vera Cruz with a portion of his command, and was awaiting the arrival of the remainder, received M'Intosh's first letter on the 7th. He was without any organized train, and, at the time, totally unprepared for a movement; but, in the urgency of the case, his preparations were energetic, and a train of a certain kind was got in readiness by harnessing a quantity of Mexican horses to the wagons. Early on the morning of the 8th he marched with one company of dragoons, a detachment of infantry, and two mountain howitzers—in all, numbering about 500 men. His column effected a junction with M'Intosh's on the morning of the 10th, and Cadwalader assumed command of the whole. His troops were no better than M'Intosh's, and the train which had accompanied the first detachment was so crippled and broken that it was impossible to move in advance on that day. By the afternoon of the 11th the damages were partially repaired, and the march was resumed.

Several parties of the enemy were observed on the right of the road, watching the progress of the command, and once or twice detachments of dragoons were sent in pursuit, but unsuccessfully. Upon nearing the National Bridge, the enemy was found to be in possession of it and the surrounding heights, and in force.

To the left, a hill fort, which had been built during the war of Mexican independence, but for a long time abandoned, commanded the road in its

approach, and also the bridge, which was obstructed within the nearest range of the heights on either side by a wagon placed across it and covered over with brushwood. Both heights were strongly occupied by the enemy, but his main force was in position on the heights beyond the bridge and on the right.

It was near night when Cadwalader arrived in sight of the position, and the reconnaissance, which was hurriedly made, developed only the general dispositions of the enemy. He organized a party to ascend the hill upon the left and dislodge the enemy from the fort, and, at the same time, advanced the howitzers, supported by a detachment of dragoons and two companies of infantry, against the barricade. The howitzers opened fire, but the barricade was not injured. The dragoons were ordered to charge, and started forward at a gallop, but had not reached the middle of the bridge when the hill-sides on either flank were lit up by the blaze of five hundred escopetas. The men and horses being raw, the fire threw them into confusion. They recoiled, and it appeared that they would give way; but Lieutenant Maney, who commanded the detachment, turned his horse to the barricade, called on the men to follow him, and took it at a fly. The men rallied, and came on in confusion, scrambling over the barricade as best they could. Once over it, they were reformed, and advanced up the road, clearing it of the enemy for some distance.



The supporting infantry came confusedly forward, and the enemy still continued to pour his fire from the heights on the right. Cadwalader crossed the bridge in person with his staff, and, after collecting the advanced troops, sent two detachments, under Captain Pitman of the ninth infantry, and his assistant adjutant general, Captain Hooker, to carry the enemy's position. These officers met with speedy success, and remained on the heights during the night.

The enemy in the fort on the left fled soon after the action had commenced, and, the passage of the bridge being secured, the train was brought forward and parked for the night, without further direct opposition from the enemy, although a large party, supposed to be that which had fled from the fort, threatened a serious attack upon the rear. A few shots from the rear guard, however, dispersed it, and no further annoyance was experienced that night.

In this affair the American force lost thirty-two men in killed and wounded from the escort alone; and, besides these, the loss included a comparatively large number of drivers and other employés of the quarter-master's department.\*

On the following day the wounded were sent back to Vera Cruz under an escort, and on the 13th the march was resumed. The enemy still hovered on the flanks, and, whenever an opportunity was

\* Brigadier-general Cadwalader's Report. Executive Document, No. 1, Senate, first Session of the thirtieth Congress, p. 19.

presented, did not fail to send his volleys from the rocks and thickets along the road, which inflicted some loss in men and animals. Early on the morning of the 14th detachments were sent in advance, which seized the commanding positions about Cerro Gordo, and the train, having passed that point on the 15th, arrived at Jalapa without further resistance.

Childs was still there, having been delayed in moving the hospital to Perote, and it was not until the 18th that the united commands were in readiness to advance. In the mean while, information had been received that the enemy intended to dispute the pass of La Hoya, and, in consequence, the march of the 18th only extended to the village at its mouth.

On the morning of the 19th four companies were sent forward to seize the heights which commanded the pass. Two companies of the command reached the summit of the mountain on the left, and moved along the crest, without meeting an enemy, until the head of the main column, which was advancing along the road, had reached the western extremity of the defile. Then the party on the mountain discovered the guerilleros, occupying a height most difficult of access, and commanding the road from the left. Two companies were sent up to re-enforce the party, and the whole four, advancing cautiously, poured in a fire which caused a precipitate retreat of the enemy in the direction of Perote; but, upon coming into the road, the gue-

rilleros fell in with a portion of the garrison of the castle ; for the governor, having received information of their intention, had moved to take them in reverse. The firing was quite sharp for a few minutes ; but the advance of the American column was coming rapidly up the road, having cleared the pass, and the Mexicans soon dispersed over the hills, pursued, in scattered parties, by the victors. The loss of the guerilleros in this affair was nearly thirty in killed and wounded, left upon the field. The Americans had only a few soldiers slightly wounded.

Cadwalader pursued his march, and reached Perote on the 21st. As many of his draught animals had given out, he was again delayed in refitting until the 23d. On that day he received an order from Major-general Pillow, who was advancing from Vera Cruz, to await his arrival. Pillow had landed on the 13th, and proceeded at once to organize a train, and advance into the interior with the troops which remained, and had arrived at the depôt after Cadwalader's movement. He marched on the 17th with near 1500 men, and, although he was annoyed along his whole route by small parties of the enemy, which hovered in his neighborhood to give a random shot or to cut off stragglers, he reached Jalapa without serious opposition. There he halted for some days to replace his draught animals, the same object which had delayed Cadwalader. The animals furnished at Vera Cruz were, indeed, of the most miserable de-



scription, and the heavy roads of the tierra caliente soon broke them down so as to render them comparatively useless. These having been replaced in a manner, Pillow marched from Jalapa, and on the 1st of July effected a junction with the advanced columns at Perote. Thence the united commands, in all numbering near 4500 men, marched for Puebla on the 2d and 3d.

A show of opposition at the pass of El Pinal was all which was encountered. A heavy force of mounted guerilleros had taken post there on the 7th, but they fled before the approach of a party of American dragoons, which took several prisoners in the pursuit. On the 8th the column entered Puebla, increasing the force there present, under General Scott, to 10,276 of all arms; but of this number 2215 were on the sick report.

The occurrences at Puebla and Mexico during the months of June and July, and the preparations for the further advance of the American army, may well form the subject of a separate chapter; and as, at the period of time treated of in this, occurred the last positive hostile operations of the squadron in the Gulf of Mexico, it may be proper to record them here, although they have no connection with the movements of the army.

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As he had intended, Commodore Perry returned to the Tobasco River with all of the smaller vessels of the squadron, having in view an expedition up

the river, and an attack upon the enemy, who was in some force in the vicinity of the town. On the 13th of June he anchored off the bar, and on the following day passed it with the gun-boats, the small steamers, a number of barges and surf-boats, having on board detachments from the different vessels, numbering a thousand men, and seven pieces of artillery. With this force he proceeded up the river. On the 15th, when within thirty miles of the town of Tobasco, information was received that the enemy had thrown up breast-works in the thick chaparral along the river banks, at three different points, which were occupied by strong parties in ambush. As the flotilla proceeded up the stream, it was fired upon at each of the three, by which one officer and four seamen were wounded; but the enemy fled so soon as the guns of the flotilla opened upon his positions.\*

From a point within nine miles of the town the river banks were strongly fortified, and the channel obstructed in such a manner that it was doubtful whether the steamers could make the ascent. It was determined not to await the experiment, and the detachments were landed at once. Eleven hundred men and ten pieces of artillery were soon on shore, and marched immediately for the town, driving back the pickets and small parties of the enemy. The steamers soon after succeeded in passing the obstructions, and, as they approached

\* Commodore Perry's Report. Executive Document, No. 1, House of Representatives, second Session of the thirtieth Congress, p. 1209.

Tobasco, engaged the principal battery of six guns and a strong force of infantry in the intrenchments. But a few shots, however, were exchanged, for the enemy fled from his defenses, and the detachments on land occupied the town with but slight resistance.

Two officers and seven seamen, wounded and missing, made up the total loss encountered in this expedition. The enemy suffered more, and lost all his artillery (nine pieces), besides a quantity of ordnance stores.

The commodore, having ordered the destruction of the fortifications and the removal of the captured material to the flotilla, on the 22d left Tobasco in possession of a force of 420 men, belonging to the small vessels which remained off the town, and temporarily under Commander Van Brunt.

The enemy hung about the place, and sought every opportunity for annoyance. On the 25th some of his parties approached so close as to deliver a fire upon the Americans, which wounded one man. The same night an attack was made upon the American main guard, which, however, resulted in nothing.

Under these circumstances, Commander Bigelow, who arrived there on the evening of the 26th from Frontera, ordered the destruction of the huts in the suburbs, which were consumed, and, during the night of the 29th, when it was believed that the enemy contemplated an attack, a few shells were fired over the town.



On the morning of the 30th an expedition started for the village of Tamultay, where the main force of the enemy was stationed. One hundred and fifty men and a piece of artillery proceeded by land, while the steamers were to ascend the river. The land party fell in with the enemy within a short distance of the village, and dispersed his force after a little firing. The village was occupied, a few worthless arms destroyed, and the command returned. The steamers had been unable to ascend the river in time to join in the skirmish.

Frontera, the Coatzacoalcas, and the neighborhood of Alvarado, continued to be held by the naval forces for a subsequent period, but the opposition on the part of the enemy was but that of annoyance, and there remained no new duty of importance to be performed. The greater portion of the squadron remained at anchor off Vera Cruz, while the smaller vessels were lying at the different occupied ports, or cruising up and down the coast of the Gulf.

## CHAPTER V.

Difficulties of the American Army at Puebla—Opinions and Feelings of the General—His Reconciliation with Mr. Trist—Probable Cause of Reconciliation—Mr. Trist's Action—Proposition of Santa Anna to open Negotiations in consideration of a Bribe of One Million of Dollars—General Scott's Arguments in favor of accepting it—Meeting of General Officers—Opinions—Santa Anna's Action and Policy—Mexican Politics—Mexican Preparation for Defense—American Prisoners—Action and probable Motives of British Legation—Probable Policy of Santa Anna—American Preparations to advance—General Pierce's Movement from Vera Cruz—General Smith's Movement—Affair of San Juan de los Llanos—Garrison of Puebla—Santa Anna's final Proposition to General Scott—He accepts it—Santa Anna's Policy—Preparations—*Observations.*

WHILE awaiting the arrival of the garrison of Jalapa and the expected party of recruits, General Scott was engaged in disciplining and refitting his army. He had many difficulties to overcome, and not the least of these was the want of money; for the government at Washington had counted, to a certain extent, upon the ability of the general to raise contributions from the country, and if they failed, that the drafts of the disbursing officers upon the American cities could be easily negotiated. Neither of these methods of obtaining funds supplied the wants of the army. General Scott had refused to attempt the former from Jalapa; the latter had been adopted, and was successful to a degree. It had been easy to raise money upon drafts at Vera Cruz and Jalapa, by forbidding the export of any specie in those places, and in that manner

the army had been supplied until it had reached Puebla. The supply in that city was scanty, and the holders demanded and obtained a high premium. What there was was soon exhausted; and, had it not been for the sum brought up by M'Intosh's train, the army would have been penniless. That sum had been intended for the pay department, and, as it was appropriated in great measure to the commissary's and quarter-master's, the troops remained unpaid. The army was also without stores of clothing either at Vera Cruz or Puebla, and four months' service had rendered a refit absolutely necessary. The evil was remedied to a degree by having clothing made up in the country, and issuing it to the troops; but it was of very inferior quality, and unsatisfactory to either officers or men.\*

All these difficulties, disappointments, and annoyances confirmed the ill feeling of the general-in-chief toward the government. In his letter of the 4th of June to the Secretary of War, he had asked to be relieved from the command so soon as it would be safe for any person to leave the country; and in a subsequent letter, written after he knew that a portion of his asserted grievances were without foundation, on the 25th of July, his complaints were no less violent, and the tone of his correspondence was any thing rather than subordinate or respectful. The letter was not immediately re-

\* General Scott to Mr. Marcy, July 25th, 1847. Executive Document, No. 60, House of Representatives, first Session of the thirtieth Congress, p. 1015.



ceived at Washington, owing to the failure of the messenger; but, as it was written at the time and forwarded, it is a true exponent of his feelings and opinions.\*

The most remarkable thing which it announced was that a happy change had taken place in the relations between himself and Mr. Trist. How this reconciliation was brought about between persons antagonistic in politics, and who had for some time been indulging themselves in the most unmitigated abuse of each other, and how General Scott at last became convinced that the writer of the "far-rago of insolence, conceit, and arrogance," as he had characterized one of Mr. Trist's voluminous letters, was "able, discreet, courteous, and amiable," is yet, to a certain extent, a mystery, and it may ever remain so. It was probably through the intervention of General Persifor F. Smith, at whose quarters Mr. Trist resided while in Puebla, and who was on friendly terms with General Scott. The motives of the parties, and the opportunities which were presented for his intervention, may be judged of from the events of the period and from the characters of the different persons.

Mr. Trist had been watching an opportunity to commence the business of his mission, and had several conversations with Mexicans and foreigners of intelligence upon the subject. He determined to send the note of Mr. Buchanan to the Mexican

\* General Scott to Mr. Marcy, July 25th, 1847. Executive Document, No. 60, House of Representatives, first Session of the thirtieth Congress, p. 1015.

minister of foreign relations through the British ambassador at Mexico, if that functionary had no objection to transmitting it, and therefore addressed a note to Mr. Bankhead on the 6th of June, making inquiries in regard to his disposition.\* On the receipt of the note, Mr. Bankhead sent the secretary of the British legation, Mr. Thornton, to Puebla for the purpose of receiving the letter, and of having a conversation with Mr. Trist upon the objects of his mission. The letter was sent by the hands of the secretary, to be delivered to the Mexican minister, if there were in existence in Mexico a positive and responsible government.†

The British minister delivered it, and on the 22d of June it was answered by Señor Ibarra; but the answer was like all former answers of the Mexican government to similar previous communications. The determination of the matter was left to Congress;‡ and how much was to be hoped from its action experience had shown. In this matter, therefore, so far as appears from any direct public correspondence with the Mexican government, can be seen no opportunity for commencing negotiations, and no reason for the reconciliation; and it could not have been brought about by the receipt of any instructions from Washington.

The news of the quarrel had caused deep regret

\* Mr. Trist to Mr. Bankhead, June 6th, 1847. Executive Document, No. 52, Senate, first Session of the thirtieth Congress, p. 181.

† Idem, June 11th, 1847. Idem, p. 184.

‡ Executive Document, No. 1, Senate, first Session of the thirtieth Congress, p. 40.

at that place, and the conduct of both General Scott and Mr. Trist was highly disapproved. The President of the United States and the Secretaries of State and War saw the misapprehensions which had been the immediate and apparent cause of the outbreak, and the secretaries wrote at once to correct them.

On the 14th of June Mr. Buchanan wrote to Mr. Trist to sacrifice his private resentment, and to make an attempt to conciliate the general by a full disclosure of the objects of his mission.\* On the 13th of July the secretary wrote again. In the mean time, he had received copies of the voluminous and bitter correspondence which had passed between the officers, and Mr. Trist was severely blamed for his unauthorized course in constituting himself the aid-de-camp of the President, and presuming to give orders to the general-in-chief.† No further instructions were given him, inasmuch as it was expected that, in obedience to those of June 14th, he would have made concessions which would satisfy the general and permit the public service to proceed without obstruction from personal quarrels.

Mr. Marcy wrote on the subject to General Scott on the 31st of May. He explained the objects of Mr. Trist's mission, and the misapprehensions under which the general was laboring, and expressed the belief that he would carry out the views of the government in good faith when the contingency

\* Executive Document, No. 60, House of Representatives, first Session of the thirtieth Congress, p. 827.

† *Idem*, p. 829.



arose which would require his co-operation.\* The subsequent letters of the Secretary of War were in further explanation, and in answer to the various complaints made by General Scott upon the subject; but, as none were received before the 26th of June, the time of the occurrence of the "happy change," the correspondence can only be taken as the index of opinions of the people at Washington. The motives of the parties and the causes of the reconciliation must be looked for in the events which took place in the vicinity of the headquarters of the army; and, if nothing more had transpired in reference to the negotiation of a treaty, the reconciliation would hardly have taken place. Enemies, especially political enemies, are not reconciled without a cause; and on the 26th of June, as nothing had been received from Washington, the apparent probable course of the parties was, that they would await the result of their communications, when each might have expected to receive a vindication of his conduct, and that the other would be recalled.

About the same time that the public answer to Mr. Buchanan's note was received, private advices also arrived, at Puebla, from the Mexican president, who was by the time fairly settled in his authority, and was straining every nerve to prepare his capital for defense against the invader. The matter contained in those advices may have been

\* Executive Document, No. 60, House of Representatives, first Session of the thirtieth Congress, p. 960.

the cause of the reconciliation of the general and commissioner.

It was intimated, on the part of the Mexican president, to Mr. Trist, that nothing could be accomplished without the use of money; but that, if one million of dollars were placed at the disposal of Santa Anna, to be paid upon the conclusion of a treaty of peace, and ten thousand dollars, which it was necessary should be paid immediately, he would appoint commissioners to negotiate.

This proposition was the immediate subject of discussion between General Scott and Mr. Trist, and rendered their agreement a matter of policy, inasmuch as it may have given to each an opportunity of action, with the hope of future aggrandizement; for, at the time, it was believed that peace was the great desire of the American people and government. Being and having been in the political field, General Scott was perfectly willing to do any thing to secure his popularity. He had laid a foundation for the superstructure by the capture of Vera Cruz and the victory of Cerro Gordo, and his numerous letters of complaint had made it an easy matter for his partisans in the United States to get up a cry of persecution—a political measure often resorted to with success; and in this case, when set forth in connection with the prominent military services of the persecuted, it may have been hoped to exercise a very beneficial effect.

As for future victories, it was not known how great they might be, and how much eclat would

be awarded to them. The battle of Buena Vista, which had been fought contrary to all expectations of General Scott, had taken well with the American people, and Taylor had evidently carried off the greater share of military glory. But as the American press, and especially the Whig party press, was calling out for peace, it could have been anticipated that the combination of its "conquest" with the military achievements of the general-in-chief would outweigh the services of General Taylor in public estimation, and command greater admiration than that given to simple, hard-fighting military renown.

General Scott had already acquired some reputation as a peace-maker by his bloodless removal of the Cherokee Indians, and by a correspondence in which he was engaged on the subject of the northeastern boundary dispute with Great Britain. If he could have made, or been the chief instrument in making, a peace which would satisfy the Whig party (an easy matter, for the Whigs were crying for it on any terms), and the Democratic party to a certain extent (which, indeed, it must have done, since it required the approval of the President), it could very easily have been said by his political friends that he had triumphed by his great military skill and diplomatic talent, in spite of the many obstacles in his way, and the "many cruel disappointments" which he had received at the hands of the War Department, and obtained the end so anxiously desired by the government and people of his country.



Mr. Trist's reasons for desiring the reconciliation are no less palpable. His functions were as naught so long as he was not on good terms with General Scott. Any reputation which he may have hoped to gain by the negotiation was in a fair way of being compromised by a continuation of the quarrel, and it is probable that a little reflection and advice had convinced him how much blame would be laid upon his shoulders should the negotiation be frustrated. He had received an admonition, not to say a threat, from the general in relation to his correspondence, and the latter could have sent him out of the country. He was exceedingly unpopular with the army, and the many friends of General Scott wished no less. He had no prestige of military fame which could sustain his reputation, and enable him to appear well before the American people in case of failure. All which he could depend upon was the favor of the administration, and how far that would have been given in support of his conduct, and how far it would have availed if given, may well be questioned. As the negotiation, if commenced under Santa Anna's proposition, was one of exceeding delicacy, and required the co-operation of General Scott, it may have been his policy to conciliate him.

On the 25th of June Mr. Trist sent a note to the general, to which the latter transmitted a courteous reply.\* The matter contained in the notes is not

\* Mr. Trist to Mr. Buchanan, July 23d, 1847. Executive Document, No. 60, House of Representatives, first Session of the thirtieth Congress, p. 830.

public, as copies were never received at the State Department at Washington; but from that time the intercourse was friendly, and, from being friendly, soon became cordial, until at last it ended in the closest intimacy between the general and the man whom he had considered as being "the personification of Danton, Marat, and St. Just all in one," lacking only the ambulatory guillotine with which those worthies were accompanied.\* Mr. Trist at once became a man of high importance in the army. He changed his cognomen of simple Mr. Trist, the chief clerk of the State Department, and a confidential agent of the government, to that of the American minister. All guards, even that at general head-quarters, were ordered to turn out on his approach, which was to be announced by that title, and to pay him appropriate honors. At the time, so far as related to mutual intercourse, it would have been hard to say which one of the reconciled functionaries excelled in courtesy and amiability.

When Pillow arrived at Puebla, he was made a party in the conferences which were taking place upon the subject of negotiations, in compliance with an informal and confidential request from authority at Washington. Moreover, it may have been a measure of policy to have him included, as he was a strong Democrat, and well known as a particular personal friend of the President. Being

\* Executive Document, No. 60, House of Representatives, first Session of the thirtieth Congress, p. 996.

a third party, and a principal neither in military nor diplomatic station, the credit of the business, if credit there were, could not very well fall to his lot; and in the event of the failure and publicity of the negotiation, and of odium attaching to it, he could very well be brought in to bear his portion of the responsibility.

The policy of agreeing to the demands of Santa Anna was most strongly advocated by General Scott in several meetings and discussions which took place. Various objections were started to the negotiation, as being wrong in itself, and not in accordance with the practice of the American government to have recourse to bribes in the prosecution of diplomatic business, and, moreover, impolitic, as not likely to be countenanced by the American people. General Scott's arguments in favor of the measure were in substance the following: That the bribery was not wrong in itself, inasmuch as General Santa Anna had placed himself in the market, and the fact that he was found in the market offering to take a bribe was an evidence that he was already corrupt. As to the second objection, he referred to the fact that the government had sanctioned the secret expenditure of five hundred thousand dollars in the adjustment of the northeastern boundary question, was in the habit of making presents to the chiefs of Indian tribes, and had made them to the Barbary powers, which were but bribes. Hence his conclusion was, that the practice was one of common event in diplo-



matic affairs, and that it had been sanctioned by the government of the United States. Under the influence of this information and argument, Pillow, who had raised the objections, yielded them, and agreed that, as the government had sanctioned the usage, it was, on the whole, expedient to open the negotiation, rather than to march on Mexico and fight another battle for peace or the conquest of the capital.

The difficulty in acceding to the proposition was mainly in the want of money. The appropriation of three millions of dollars for diplomatic purposes had been made in no expectation of such a contingency as the present, and, moreover, required vouchers for its expenditure. It would hardly have been made had the American Congress expected that it would be used in such a manner. As the vouchers were liable to publication upon a call of Congress, if it were possible to use any portion of it, it would have been inexpedient. The manner in which the general intended to obtain the money was by placing the expenditure to the account of some one of the departments of the army, and he was willing to take the whole responsibility of answering for the expenditure before a committee of Congress, should one be appointed to investigate it.

The affair being thus arranged, communications in cipher (the key of which had been received from Mexico) were sent by Mr. Trist to the secret agents of Santa Anna, notifying him, through them,

that his proposition was accepted, and the ten thousand dollars stipulated for immediately were paid over from the secret service money which General Scott had at his disposal.

In the mean while, preparations for an advance were in progress ; but, before they were completed, or the news of any positive public action on the part of Santa Anna had been received, General Scott learned that Brigadier-general Pierce was advancing with another column of re-enforcements from Vera Cruz. Under these circumstances, he called a meeting of general officers, at which Generals Pillow, Quitman, Twiggs, Shields, and Cadwalader were present. General Smith was absent with a command sent to meet Pierce's column. General Scott had quarreled with Worth on account of his convention with the city authorities of Puebla, and, as they were unfriendly at the time, he did not invite him.

To the general officers present, General Scott submitted the propriety of advancing immediately upon Mexico, or of awaiting the arrival of Pierce's column. He also made known the proposed negotiations with Santa Anna, with the views and arguments in favor of it which he had before expressed in conference, and asked opinions. They were decided as to the propriety of awaiting the arrival of General Pierce, but differences were expressed in relation to the negotiation. Pillow, having previously agreed to it, gave his in favor of the measure. Quitman and Shields opposed it strong-

ly, Twiggs gave no opinion, and Cadwalader, although by no means in favor of it, inasmuch as the matter had been confided to so many, and could hardly be kept quiet when there was opposition of a decided character, gave no positive opinion at the meeting. General Smith was understood to be aware of the business, and to approve it. General Scott, however, was willing to take the responsibility upon himself; but he intended that the conversation should be confidential, and expressed his desire that it should be so considered by the officers present. Not many days elapsed, however, before a letter, laudatory of one of the opposing generals, was on its way to the United States, giving a somewhat inaccurate account of the whole transaction, so far as it was disclosed at the meeting.\*

How much good faith there was in Santa Anna's proposition, at the time he made it, is difficult to say; and as his intentions changed with the ever-varying politics of his country, it is more difficult to say how long it lasted, if it ever were one of its characteristics. It is very probable that at first he was willing to give up the contest with the Americans, provided he could get the consent of the government, as he had a large army at his disposal with which to secure his power. But, whether made in good faith or not, the proposition was a measure of policy in keeping with the whole course of conduct of the Mexican president.

\* Letter of "Gomez" to the St. Louis Republican.



Soon after it had been transmitted to General Scott, there appeared in the journals of the capital a report of a reputed council of war held at the American head-quarters, in which the numbers and strength of the American army were given with an accuracy which showed that it had its origin in a quarter where they were well understood. The opinions given by the generals were such as to render the report very plausible, in consideration of their different characters, and it ended by announcing that a speedy advance would soon be made upon the capital.

No such meeting ever took place, and the publication of the report was doubtless put forth as a feeler by the Mexican authorities, in order to ascertain how far the opinion of the public and of the army would support Santa Anna in the measures of negotiation or hostility.

Santa Anna may have hoped that, if the public apprehension were aroused, the feeling may have been strong in favor of peace, and that then he could undertake the negotiation with a prospect of success. He could then have bought over such a number of deputies, whom he could control in no other manner, as to make up, with his strong partisans, a majority in Congress, and secure its acquiescence. A good share of the money stipulated for as the price of the negotiation might have been reserved for himself. In case the sentiment of the people was warlike and in favor of resistance, by the proposition which he made Santa

Anna had delayed, or thought he had delayed, the advance of the American army, and gained time to complete his defenses, and for the arrival of men and material at the capital. Meanwhile, he spared no effort to insure success, should the alternative of deciding the question by a contest of arms be adopted.

The public opinion, so far as it can be judged of by the Mexican journals of the period, was unstable to a degree, and the manifestations of it were not sufficiently strong to take the responsibility of any measure from the executive. It was believed by many that the resistance would be triumphant, and all indulged in boasting of the certainty of such an event. Still, the approach of the North Americans was looked upon with apprehension, and there was an uncertainty of purpose and opinion, which was generally ended by a hearty abuse of the invaders and the whole Yankee race.

The letter of Mr. Buchanan had been referred to the Congress, but that body was unable to act from want of a quorum. Many timid members took the method of absenting themselves in order to get rid of the responsibility of voting for or against the consideration of the offers of the negotiation. The papers were daily filled with notices for them to assemble, but for some time these were unheeded. By the 13th of July, however, the letter was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations. The report was rendered on the same day, and was at once adopted. It left the matter just where it pre-

viously stood, and was a stroke of policy or intrigue which compared well with that which Santa Anna had made, when, after imprisoning the chiefs of the opposition, he resigned the presidency, and placed Congress in the dilemma of supporting him, or of allowing affairs to go on without any directing head.

After various expositions concerning legality, interests, and honors, the paper ended with the recommendation that, "With a copy of this report let the dispatch be returned to the government, because in the present situation of the affair it comes within its cognizance, with the restrictions which are established by the fundamental code of the republic," thus declaring that the President must take the responsibility of the negotiation upon himself, and that such was his duty; and this in the face of the law of April 20th, which expressly withheld from the executive any authority to make peace with the United States, and declared every individual a traitor who should, either as a private citizen or a public officer, treat with that government.

On the 16th, a paper, signed by Señor Pacheco, then Minister of Relations, was sent before the Congress, which combated the position taken in the report, and insisted that it was its duty, under the existing law, either to untie the hands of the executive, or to express its disapprobation of the measure in a positive manner. But Congress was slow to act, and open negotiations were forbidden.



The military preparations, however, went on. The fortifications were completed and increased, and a corps of over 5000 men and twenty-two pieces of artillery arrived from San Luis de Potosi, under General Valencia, who had some time before returned to the service. The command was entirely of regular troops, and had formed part of the army collected by Santa Anna before his advance to Angostura. Valencia, who had but recently made his peace with Santa Anna, was not slow in denouncing the proposed measure of negotiations. He boasted loudly of the ability of the troops to defend the capital; and in a junta of general officers, asked for the command of a force of 12,000 men, that he might advance on Puebla and expel the invaders from the city. His request was not granted, but his noisy braggadocia was an obstacle in the way of negotiations, if, indeed, they were contemplated in good faith.

In the mean while certain military communications passed between the armies respecting the American prisoners, who, in spite of their stipulated exchange, and the great number of Mexican prisoners at large on parole, were still retained in Mexico. The Mexican authorities had failed to comply with the repeated and urgent demands of General Scott for their release, probably because they disliked to lose the only proof of a semblance of victorious achievement in their possession, and on account of the knowledge and information which the officers and men must have gained of the state of affairs

and defense while on parole in the capital. It was finally decided that the privates should be marched to Tampico and delivered up there, but the officers were retained in the capital, and subsequently ordered and sent to Toluca; two, however, attempted and made their escape to Puebla.

By the end of July the force present in the city of Mexico, according to Mexican accounts, was over 36,000 men, and one hundred pieces of artillery of different calibers. This force and armament would appear to any one fully sufficient to defend a city against an enemy who, it was well known, could not bring 10,000 troops into the field; and it may have been that Congress and the people of Mexico were then so confident of success that they did not wish to make peace on any terms without a victory, and therefore there existed no apparent necessity for untying the hands of Santa Anna for the purpose. Having collected his force, and being nearly prepared at all points, he, too, may have been willing to hazard his fortunes in another battle; and the time was most favorable, if such were to be the event. He did not fail to allure his adversary to advance before he received other re-enforcement.

While the consideration of Buchanan's letter was before Congress, he kept up his secret correspondence, and intimations reached Puebla that, in order to enable him to work upon the public pulse, and to secure him in his appointment of commissioners, it would be necessary for the American

army to advance and threaten the capital. Such a movement on the part of General Scott gave the Mexican every advantage, for it presented his enemy within close distance in his smallest force, and left him at liberty to attack, or to await an attack in strong defenses, or to enter into negotiations for peace, as might best suit his purposes at the moment.

The British officials continued to be engaged in transmitting the communications, and apparently took great interest in the negotiation. What their motives were can hardly be told ; for, while it was evidently British interest that peace should be made, it was also British interest that the terms should be favorable to Mexico rather than the United States. Whether it was desired by them that a peace should be concluded which should compromise a large portion of the Mexican territory is exceedingly doubtful.

The policy of the Mexican government, as set forth in the *Diario del Gobierno* about the close of July, was to make peace with the United States ultimately. War, it was said, was not the normal state of nations, and peace must result at some period or other of the crisis ; but that peace could not be made until Mexico had gained a victory which would vindicate the national honor, heretofore compromised by a series of disasters and defeats. But little doubt was expressed that the result of the contest about the city of Mexico would be glorious to the nation, and that, when she had rolled back



the tide of invasion, Mexico could afford to accept the offers of negotiation.

This view may have been entertained by the British diplomatists; for, could Mexico have obtained the victory, and have made peace immediately afterward, it might well have been believed that the terms would be the most favorable.

That Santa Anna then held such policy is also probable; for, although his extraordinary exertions had raised a large force in an incredibly short space of time after each succeeding defeat, yet he knew that the resources of the country were well-nigh exhausted, and that nothing but a speedy conclusion of the war could be hoped to save it from destruction at the mercy of the invader. That a treaty could be best made after a victory was a probable event; and, moreover, the prestige of victory was necessary for him to retain his power over his countrymen after the retirement of the American army.

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As he did not count upon Santa Anna's implied promises with full confidence, General Scott had not relaxed his exertions to prepare for the advance; and when Santa Anna's suggestion was received that he should make such movement, it was, of course, easy to be adopted. He only awaited the arrival of Pierce's column.

The troops had been partially reclothed, their arms and accouterments repaired, and in most re-

spects the effective force was in excellent condition and spirit.

The sick list was, however, large, for the men were not fully acclimated, and the rarefied atmosphere of the plateau affected them severely.

The engineer officers had been employed in obtaining information of the localities, routes, and defenses about the capital; with how much success will appear in the sequel.

The army was not well assured of the advance during all this while, for the fact that negotiations of some kind were in progress was well known, and various people about head-quarters announced, from time to time, a probability of peace, which was, perhaps, soon contradicted, and rumors were again rife of continued war.

General Pierce, who meantime was advancing, left Vera Cruz on the 19th of July with near 3000 men of all arms, having been delayed until that time by the want of transportation. His force was principally composed of new regular regiments and recruits for the old. No organized opposition was offered by the guerilleros, although he was constantly annoyed and harassed from the flanks, which caused him some loss in wounded, but no delay. The bridge of the Rio del Plan, a noble arch, had been destroyed, in the hope of impeding his progress; but a few hours' work sufficed to cut a road down the steep banks, and, as the river was only a streamlet, the whole column and convoy passed without accident. At Jalapa he

found some difficulty in obtaining supplies, but the threat of sending the civil authorities to the castle of Perote as prisoners had at once the desired effect, and the supplies were furnished.

General Scott had understood that Pierce was advancing by the Orizaba road, in order to avoid the obstructions thrown in his path by the demolition of the bridges. General Smith's brigade was sent from Puebla to meet him on that road, and to clear it of any force which might be in position to oppose his march by attacking it from the rear, for Don Juan Alvarez was making demonstrations of moving from Atlixco for that purpose. Smith learned, however, soon after leaving Puebla, that Pierce was not on the southern route, and he therefore moved on the National Road. At El Pinal he obtained information of an establishment of guerillas near the road, at the hacienda of San Juan de los Llanos, about midway between Ojo del Agua and Tepeahualco. Having continued his march to Ojo del Agua, he sent Captain Ruff with a squadron of horse (one troop of dragoons and one of mounted rifles) to break it up.

Ruff attacked the hacienda on the 30th of July, and, notwithstanding the strong positions of the guerilleros and their superior force, for they numbered over 300, his command completely routed them, with a loss of forty killed and fifty wounded. To do it, the riflemen dismounted, and actually drove the enemy from the buildings by sharpshooting through the windows. The American



loss was trifling. The buildings were destroyed, and the squadron returned. Ruff was then sent to Perote, where he met Pierce's command on the 1st of August.\*

Smith, in the mean time, distributed his force along the road, stationing one regiment at Vireyes, another corps at El Pinal, while he remained with a third at Ojo del Agua. On Ruff's return, he collected his troops and returned to Puebla. Pierce followed, and entered that city on the 6th of August with a force of 2429 men of all arms. His loss had been principally from sickness, and the invalids had been left at Perote. Besides them were those wounded by the desultory fire of the guerilleros.

By the 6th of August, the corps previously at Puebla were in readiness to march. The garrison of that city had been designated, and was to consist of one small company of cavalry, two of regular artillery, and six companies of Pennsylvania, all under command of Colonel Childs. The whole number of effectives in the command numbered but little over 500. Eighteen hundred sick were, however, left in hospital, of which many were convalescent, and available for defense to a certain extent, and besides these were several civil employées. The hospital and stores were all located in the southeastern quarter of the town, under the fortifications of

\* General Smith to Captain Scott, August 2d, 1847. Executive Document, No. 1, Senate, first Session of the thirtieth Congress. Appendix to the Report of the Secretary of War, p. 25.

the hill of Guadalupe and Fort Loretto. But few buildings other than those required for the shelter of the troops and stores were included in the line of defense to which it was proposed to restrict the occupation of the city. The positions were strong, and Fort Loretto was armed with a mortar and two twelve pounder guns, and, besides this artillery, several mountain howitzers were left, which were available for the defense of the occupied buildings.

With the exception of the troops and armament named above, all other force was to move in advance. While the army was in the midst of active preparation, about the last of July, a communication from the Mexican president, sent through his secret agents, reached Mr. Trist, and, through him, the general-in-chief, suggesting, as the only method by which they could hope to obtain peace, that the American general should march his army into the valley, and attack and carry one of the outworks of the Mexican line of defense, and then, if he halted his troops and sent in a flag of truce, offering to negotiate, it was highly probable that the measure could be consummated. General Scott at first consented to this arrangement, with the exception of sending in a flag after achieving a partial victory, and his agreement to the remainder of the suggestion was transmitted to Santa Anna. Subsequently, however, he reconsidered the subject, at the earnest representation of General Pillow, and caused another communication to be sent to Santa Anna, so written as to relieve himself from

the committal; but he still remembered the proposition, and, at the time, determined to act in a manner corresponding to his suggestion, and expressed his intention so to act to officers before he left Puebla.\*

The proposition was made by Santa Anna, doubtless, in furtherance of the policy expressed in his official journal, and to gain as many advantages as he could from the confidence of his adversary. As for the advantages given to the American general by the arrangement, it can very readily be seen that they were none at all; and he might fail in his attempt to carry the outworks, a very probable contingency in the event of his attacking at any point which it was believed by the Mexican general that it was practicable to approach. If he did fail, he was at Santa Anna's mercy, and the Mexican could take such course as he thought proper, either to let him escape to Puebla, or to cut him up on his retreat with his overwhelming numbers, fully aroused by the victory which they had obtained. That the American army, after a repulse, would have been in sad condition to effect a retreat, any one acquainted with its character will readily admit, for it would not have ceased to struggle for the victory until cut to pieces.

If the outworks were carried, the victorious American general placed himself in the attitude of the

\* Lieutenant-colonel Hitchcock, Acting Inspector General. Introduction to intercepted Mexican Letters. Executive Document, No. 65, Senate, first Session of the thirtieth Congress, p. 409, and Lieutenant-colonel Hitchcock's Letter to the New York Courier and Enquirer. *Idem*, p. 524.



vanquished and begged for peace, and Santa Anna may have hoped to have been able to claim the victory, according to his supposed policy, and, if he felt inclined or found it expedient to gain the million of dollars, to make peace. He could claim the victory, for it could have been represented that his exertions had secured the capital, inasmuch as the invader was without its walls, and was suing for peace. If he did not wish to fulfill his engagements, by such arrangement, in case of American victory, he gained time to fortify and strengthen himself in such a manner as probably to insure success to the Mexican arms in a second contest.

The hope that the prevalence of the vomito upon the coast would delay re-enforcements to the American army had proved fallacious, and the idea that the guerillas were very efficient in breaking up the communications no less so. Santa Anna had collected all his strength—all which even his genius and energy, aided by the almost unlimited power which he possessed for that purpose, exercised, as it was, in an unscrupulous and unsparing manner upon the resources of the country, could collect, and, if the issue were to be decided by battle, the sooner the invader could be induced to march to the attack, the greater would be his chance of success.

The Americans would be then at the minimum, the Mexicans at the maximum number, and, if they were to be successful at all in their resistance, they must have been successful then. In such event, the future maintenance of a large force

would have been of comparative ease, while delay increased the difficulty, and would probably add to the resources of the invader.

Santa Anna knew, by his secret correspondence and the reports of spies, that the enemy was about to advance, and took his measures accordingly.

The drilling and disciplining of his troops had been progressing from the first. The shops and stores of Mexico had been frequently closed, in order to allow time for the drilling of the National Guards, and the troops of all classes were in as good physical condition as any troops which Mexico ever sent into the field.

General Lombardini had had direction of the military affairs in the city from the 28th of June, and had not failed in enforcing the most stringent regulations. All American residents of Mexico were expelled from the city to the interior, though some of them made their way to Puebla, in spite of the prohibition of intercourse, and the numerous corps of cavalry and guerillas by which the roads were guarded; and by the last of July, when military preparation and diplomatic intrigue had done their utmost for the cause of Mexico, and the American army, in its weak numerical strength, was about to advance, Lombardini issued the orders for the defense. They were to the effect that, upon the arrival of the Americans in the valley, a gun would be fired in the Plaza, after which all civil occupations were to be suspended, and the city was to become a camp. Each corps of troops was

to be held in hand, in readiness to move against the enemy.

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In the preparation for the defense of the capital of Mexico there was much to admire, and much which rendered the condition of affairs remarkable in history. The rally of a large force in defense of a nation's cause is in itself a sublime spectacle. In this case, when defeat and disaster had met every effort of Mexico in the struggle; when her best armies, led by her greatest generals, had been overthrown; and when, at the commencement of the preparations, the enemy was within a few days' march of the capital; when discord and jealousy were rife in the national councils; when the President was openly denounced by many, and the several factions were bitterly hostile in all save the nominal stand which had been taken in defense of the national territory and in proclaimed enmity to the United States; when the treasury was bankrupt, and money could be obtained only by forced loans and by enormous sacrifices, that the city of Mexico had been strongly fortified, and over 35,000 men collected for its defense, armed, equipped, and disciplined, and all in the short space of three months, through the energy and genius of one man, and he to a great degree unpopular, surely the preparation was remarkable, and almost without a parallel. Whatever may have been the vices, faults, follies, or misfortunes of Santa Anna, in con-



sideration of this action alone he must be allowed some meed of fame.

The means to which he resorted to effect his object were vigorous and stringent, but bloodless; and although many loud complaints were made, both by natives and foreign residents, of his conduct in seizing property for public use, and the imprisonment of the various factious leaders was denounced as arbitrary and tyrannical, yet it is difficult to see how, without the exercise of such power, Santa Anna could have placed himself in a position which promised so many advantages to his country. In the state of things which existed in Mexico, it is not so much to be wondered at that property was seized, and the leaders of the opposition imprisoned, as that it was not utterly confiscated, and that they were not put forever at rest. As for the negotiations which the President of Mexico carried on with the American general, they were dishonorable, as all must be where bribery and corruption are the end or the means. But Santa Anna displayed all his talent for intrigue, and won every advantage which was to be gained by the negotiation.

Nevertheless, jealousy and discord among the generals, and disappointment among the troops, elements of disaster which had existed in the Mexican armies from the first, existed still; and the want of moral power, which had been so deeply felt in all previous battles, had been rendered by the result of those actions still more palpable, al-

though Mexicans had every thing at stake which could call forth the spirit of the nation and the army. The genius and energy of the chief had done much ; his artful intrigue and duplicity had been called into action, and had laid the foundation of complete triumph in case of success, and probable security in case of defeat. How far his extraordinary powers for good and for evil availed in remedying the difficulties consequent to a long course of unstable government, and vicious and immoral conduct both in public and private life in Mexico, in both of which Santa Anna had been a principal participant, the results proved.

The situation of the American army was no less remarkable. With inferior numbers, it had triumphed gloriously on every field from Palo Alto to Cerro Gordo. Whether the Mexican forces had been met in the field, in cities, or in intrenchments, the result had been invariably the same. The valor of American soldiers, the moral power of freemen, directed by the skill of the officers, had overcome all obstacles, and borne the flag of the Union in triumph to the vicinity of the enemy's capital. But a greater undertaking than any in the whole course of the war was to be accomplished. From circumstances which have been noticed, its victories had not been prosecuted, and in the delays time had been afforded the enemy to recover from his disasters. These opportunities, short though they were, had been seized ; and now, having traversed a thickly-peopled country, and penetrated

two hundred miles, passing through three cities and numerous towns, the country, cities, and villages being hostile in a great degree, the American army was about to advance still further in its career of war, to the capital of Mexico, a city of one hundred and eighty thousand inhabitants, and guarded, as it was, by over three times the force of the assailants. Nor was the enemy to be encountered upon the open field, where the superior skill of the Americans in some arms of war was to be allowed an opportunity for display, as at Palo Alto and at Buena Vista; but was to be attacked in strong fortified positions, protected by a powerful fixed artillery. When the difficulties to be encountered in achieving the conquest are considered, it can not be denied that the undertaking was greater than any with which American valor had hitherto been charged; and it may well be believed that the additional difficulties presented in the course indicated by the Mexican president should in reason have made the burden too grievous to have been borne in case of his failure to fulfill his implied promises.

And what security had the American general that they were to be fulfilled? None, save the faith of a man whose whole course of life had shown that he scrupled at no violation of good faith or honor for the benefit of himself or his partisans. In favor of the success of the negotiation, there was the well-known avarice of Santa Anna. But whether the prospect of gratifying it would



not have been as good, in case he could retain power and popularity, by the repulse of the invaders as by the receipt of the bribe, is questionable. Though he was ambitious and greedy of gold, he was not less so of power and military reputation.

By adopting the course proposed, General Scott was to take all the chances of defeat and give up all advantages of a victory. If the negotiation were not successful (and its success depended upon the will of Santa Anna and the caprice of the Mexican people), the battle would have to be refought, with reduced numbers, and against strong positions. The alternative of success was defeat and disaster, if not utter annihilation.

Under these circumstances, the American advance is without parallel. In daring and in rashness, the march of Cortes over the same route, centuries before, can hardly compare with it.

The Spaniard had the advantage of arms unknown to his enemies; he had the friendship of powerful tribes and nations of the country; his principal weapon was diplomacy; and, more than all, he made use of the most powerful moral engine upon earth, superstition. Through it, he inspired dread on the part of his enemies, and zeal and valor on the part of his soldiers and allies.

The American, thus far, had been continually delayed by diplomacy; superstition had exercised its influence against him; and though it might have been easy to have taken advantage of the different elements of faction rife in Mexico, yet the

domestic policy of the United States forbade the promise of protection to insurgents beyond the period of the war. Every overture of peace made to Mexico, at the sacrifice of all ordinary rules of etiquette and action, she had rejected, and now she was to be allowed every advantage in case of future American success. With this in view, certainly those foreigners and partisans who question the justice of the cause of the United States can not be dissatisfied with the so-called "magnanimity" shown, at the risk of the safety of his army and his cause, and necessarily at that of many lives, by the American general.

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## CHAPTER VI.

Locality and Defenses of Mexican Capital—Information of American General—March of American Army from Puebla—Arrival in the Valley of Mexico—Reconnaissances of El Peñon and Mexicalcingo—Skirmish near Mira Flores—Meeting of general Officers at Ayotla—Plan of Attack proposed by General Scott on Mexicalcingo, with Movement of Worth's Division around Lake Chalco—Observations—Lieutenant-colonel Duncan's Reconnaissance—Change in General Scott's Orders—March of the Army by Chalco Route—Affair at Oka Laka.

THE situation of the capital of Mexico is exceedingly favorable for defense. The lake which surrounded it in the time of Spanish invasion and conquest has receded, it is true, and left it environed by land; but that land can, in great part, be overflowed by inundation, or rendered so marshy as to

be impracticable for the operations of masses, except along the causeways which enter the city. These circumstances render the position as strong against assault as though surrounded by water, and prevent the ease with which it might be blockaded were it in its ancient state; for, although a small number of troops on a causeway could effectually stop communication by it, yet it would require an indefinite number to close the thousand and one avenues by which the natives of the country can proceed to and from the town.

The fortifications which had been erected were of exceeding strength for field works, and were admirable both in their construction and locality. Two lines enveloped the capital, and offered resistance to the invader. The first was at some distance from the city, and consisted of fortified heights, lines of intrenchments, and artificial inundations, by which the natural obstacles of lakes, marshes, and mountains were skillfully connected.

But one great road, the great thoroughfare from the Gulf, through Puebla and Jalapa, enters the city from the east. From Puebla it leads through a cultivated and slightly undulating country as far as San Martin Tesmalucan. Beyond that place it rises in gradual ascent, for the most part, to the pass of Rio Frio, and a few miles further rapidly descends into the valley of Mexico. The country over which it passes after leaving the base of the mountain range is level, but interspersed with scattered volcanic hills of considerable height, and ex-



ceedingly rugged. In other countries they might worthily bear the name of mountain, but in the vicinity of the stupendous barriers of the valley of Mexico they sink into insignificance.

Along the road, after entering the valley, are several villages and much cultivated country, but after approaching within twelve miles of the city, a barren, desolate plain is presented to the eye, destitute of vegetation, and, to a great extent, of habitations. But one height is in the vicinity of the causeway for the remainder of the distance.

This, the hill of El Peñon, is immediately south of the road, at a distance of eight and a half miles from the city. It was the first obstacle to an approach from the east. The marshy shores of Lake Tezcucó were almost immediately upon the northern side of the causeway opposite to it, and the hill was surrounded by inundations. Two strong barricades, with wet ditches and embrasures for cannon, had been constructed in advance upon the causeway. The passage of the narrow space between the northern base and the lake was defended by a strong field-work, besides being commanded by those of El Peñon. A continued line of intrenchments extended along the eastern and southern bases, and connected with ditches and streams of water on the west. The water of the inundations washed the slope of the works, and extended for such a distance as to render even an approach a matter of extreme difficulty. Above them, on every point offering positions for defense, batteries

and breast-works had been constructed. Roads had been made over the rugged surface of the hill, which rendered the communication between the different works comparatively easy. The position was armed with twenty-six pieces of cannon, of all calibers, from thirty-two pounders to fours.

Defended by good troops, El Peñon would have been impregnable to an assault by storm, and even the task of taking it by the process of the engineer was one of great difficulty. Indeed, it blocked the main causeway from the east completely.

To turn it by the right, it would have been necessary to make a detour of thirty miles and more around the Lake of Tezcucó, and to reach the northern road, which enters the city through the town of Guadalupe Hidalgo and the garita of Peralvillo. The country along the route was destitute of wood and water to a great degree, and, upon coming to the northern road, other obstacles were presented. The hills in advance of Guadalupe were strongly fortified, and armed with twenty-two pieces of cannon. The lines were more extended than those at El Peñon, and the extent of the hills forbade the complete occupation of them by the troops of either army. Nevertheless, a good defense should have been made at that point if it were attacked. But the great obstacle to that event was the route by which Lake Tezcucó must have been turned, if the attack were to have been made there.

To turn El Peñon by the left, the first and most direct route was by a road branching from the

causeway to the south, some miles to the east of the hill. It traversed low land and meadow for the most part, passed through the old town of Tzta-palapan, and, crossing the canal from Lake Xochomilco to the city, continued on to the Acapulco road, along the causeway of San Antonio. At the crossing of the canal was the village of Mexicalcingo.

The country to the east of it was covered by inundations, and the only practicable ground upon which troops could operate was the narrow causeway. Either side was wet and boggy. Two ditches, a barricade with wet ditches, and a fortified hacienda, obstructed the direct passage of the canal. On the left, beyond the marshy ground, the Lake of Xochomilco and the canal were the obstacles, and the passage by the right was defended by a strong line of lunettes, connected by parapets and wet ditches. The system of defenses was garnished by thirty-two pieces of artillery.

This line, extending from the city of Guadalupe to the lakes of Xochomilco and Chalco, it was deemed, completely barred any approach to the capital from the east. Lake Tezcucó rendered the passage to the north of the causeway impracticable, and the ground between Mexicalcingo and El Peñon was cut up by irrigating ditches, and was, moreover, covered with the waters of the inundations. Lakes Chalco and Xochomilco extended south to high hills, spurs of the range of mountains forming the southern and western barrier of the valley of Mexico.



South of the capital the great thoroughfare is the Acapulco road, which enters the city along the causeway and at the garita of San Antonio. A line of intrenchments had been commenced, connecting the fortified hacienda of San Antonio, six miles south of the city, with the position of Mexicalcingo. From the immediate vicinity of the hacienda, the Pedregal extended west to the mountains. The Pedregal was an obstacle of no ordinary nature to military operations. A vast field of lava, interspersed with a few patches of arable land, it was practicable for the passage of any troops at but few points, and entirely impracticable for cavalry or artillery except by a single mule-path.

An approach by the Acapulco road had not been apprehended, however, and the works, although commenced, had not been pressed to completion.

The interior lines of defense had also been constructed with a view to the defense against an eastern approach, and to delay an enemy, should he succeed in forcing the strong exterior line. The garita of San Lazaro, at which the eastern road entered the city, was fortified by strong works on the causeway, having platforms and embrasures for heavy cannon. The marshy grounds south of it were defended by a system of detached redoubts and lunettes, extending to the garita of La Candelaria, on the canal from Lake Xochomilco. The great defense in that quarter was, however, in the nature of the ground, which rendered it impracticable when covered by the inundation. The soil north

of the causeway and of the city was comparatively high and firm, and the greatest labor was expended in fortifying in that quarter. A strong line of works extended from the garita of San Lazaro to that of Peralvillo, which was likewise strongly fortified, and connected by works and fortified houses with that of San Jago, another entrance on the north. Besides these defenses, advanced works had been commenced in that quarter, and the ground in front of the main line was cut into *troux de loups*.

The two entrances from the west are at the garita of San Cosme and Belen. Works had been commenced to connect that of San Cosme, the most northerly, with that of San Jago, and the nature of the country and of the buildings formed obstructions to any advance between San Cosme and Belen. Belen was defended principally by the citadel of Mexico, a square bastioned work, with wet ditches, which was immediately inside the garita. Barricades had also been commenced ; but the great obstacle to an entrance by either garita was presented in the rock and castle of Chapultepec, which were about two miles southwest of the city. From this hill two aqueducts extended to the city, the one northeast in a direct line to Belen, and the other north to the suburb of San Cosme, where, turning at right angles, it continued on and entered at the garita. The roads from the west were along the aqueducts. Chapultepec was strongly fortified by nature and art.

Two roads enter the city from the south, between the garitas Belen and San Antonio, one at the Belen, and the other at the garita of El Niño Perdido. Neither of the roads had any branches to the Acapulco road south of the Pedregal and the hacienda of San Antonio, and therefore had been left comparatively unfortified.

In general, the exterior lines were upon the east, three hills of Guadalupe Hidalgo, the lake of Tezcuco, the hill of El Peñon, the inundations, the lines of Mexicalcingo, and the lakes of Chalco and Xochomilco. On the south were the lines and fortifications at the hacienda of San Antonio and the Pedregal. These, with the mountain barriers of the valley, inclosed the city, and it was believed by Mexicans that the defenses could not be turned so as to enter the city by any of the western roads except by a circuit, which would allow ample time for completing and adding to the defenses in that direction.

The immediate defenses of the city, it will be seen, were of the least strength on the south and west. From the garita of San Jago, through those of Peralvillo and San Lazaro, to that of La Candelaria, the works were in themselves strong and strongly connected, and the nature of the ground presented great obstacles to turning them by either flank, should the exterior defenses in that direction have been forced. South, narrow roads, wet, marshy, and boggy grounds, cut up with irrigating ditches, and the whole partially covered with inundations,



were the obstacles to gaining the Acapulco road. North, several deep canals extended from the city to the hills, obstructing a passage in that direction out of range of the works.

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The general of the American army was not fully informed of the nature of the Mexican lines of defense, or of the country in the vicinity. Soon after their arrival at Puebla, his engineer officers had commenced collecting information and completing maps, by putting it down, as fast as received, upon sketches, enlarged from the common maps of the valley.\* They gained a general knowledge of the strength of the lines which were obstacles to the direct entrance into the city, and that strong defensive works were to be encountered in its close vicinity. A glance at the map showed that the ground south and west of the city was more practicable than any upon the east, and their attention had been turned to the discovery of a route by which those positions could be reached. The sources whence information was derived were almost entirely Mexican, and the informants were for the most part ignorant of military operations. All frequented routes were known to be obstructed, and of the only one by which it was hoped to turn the defenses, accounts differed as to the practicability for heavy artillery and trains at any time,

\* Lieutenant-colonel Hitchcock's Letter. Executive Document, No. 65, Senate, first Session of the thirtieth Congress, p. 523.

but the greater number agreed that it was impracticable in the rainy season.

This route was a southern one, between Lake Chalco and the mountains, and General Scott had contemplated a movement by it for some time. Although he was inclined to trust Santa Anna so far as the negotiations for peace were concerned, and had actually expressed his intention of acceding to his proposition for an armistice, yet the Mexican could impose upon his confidence no further, and failed in getting him to avow his proposed point of attack.\* He did not intend to attack the Mexican positions in the strongest point, if it could be avoided, and, although the particular features of the country and the nature of the fortifications on the west of Mexico were not as fully known as those upon the east, yet it was evident that the ground was better, and that the defenses were in a less complete state in that direction. Some time before leaving Puebla he had intended to turn the city, if possible, with his whole army, and to seize upon Chapultepec, which was understood at the time to be but slightly fortified, and comparatively easy to capture. But, as the time for the advance drew nigh, the information which was received was regarded as conclusive that the roadway around the southern shore of Lake Chalco was impassable, and attention was fixed upon the more direct routes as those by which the attack was to be made.

\* Lieutenant-colonel Hitchcock's letter. Executive Document, No. 65, Senate, first Session of the thirtieth Congress, p. 524.

Believing that his eastern exterior line was secure on either flank, Santa Anna had his army posted in great part upon the east of the city. His own head-quarters were at the hill of El Peñon. The troops in position at that point were, for the most part, the National Guards of the city of Mexico and artillerists of the line.

Valencia, with the regulars of the northern army, was charged with guarding the route by Guadalupe Hidalgo. His head-quarters were at the town of Tezcucó, on the east of the lake, in observation, and his advanced parties were pushed by the country paths north of the great road to Puebla, as far as the vicinity of San Martín Tesmalucan.

General Bravo held Mexicalcingo with troops composed of the regulars of the line and the National Guards of the different states.

General Alvarez had withdrawn his Pintos from Atlixco shortly before the advance of the American army, and taken position south of the road, within the valley of Mexico, whence he could operate, as he said, in partisan warfare.

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The garrison of Puebla having been designated, and having taken post in the positions to be occupied in that city, the American army commenced its march upon the capital. Harney's cavalry brigade and Twiggs's division marched upon the 7th of August, Quitman's volunteers on the 8th, Worth's division on the 9th, and Pillow's, the rear-





**VALLEY OF MEXICO.**

The map illustrates the Valley of Mexico, centered around the city of Mexico. Key features include:

- Geographical Features:** Lake Texcoco (LAGUNA de TEXCOCO), Lake Chapala (Lago de Chapala), and various rivers such as the Rio de San Juan and Rio de San Mateo.
- Place Names:** Mexico, Cuernavaca, Toluca, Puebla, Oaxaca, and many smaller towns and villages.
- Topography:** The map uses hachures to represent hills and mountains, showing the surrounding highlands.
- Compass Rose:** Located in the upper left corner, indicating North.



most troops of the army, marched on the 10th. General Scott moved with Quitman, but soon passed to the front.

No opposition was offered by any Mexican troops to the progress of the invading army, although detached parties of cavalry from Valencia's corps hovered in observation upon the flanks, and approached within short distance of the halting-places of the different divisions. The advanced guard entered the valley of Mexico on the 10th, and General Scott fixed his head-quarters for the time at Ayotla, a village within nine miles of the fortified position of El Peñon. Quitman arrived on the 10th, and took post some five miles to the rear, at the hacienda of Buena Vista. Worth passed him on the following day, and, turning to the left, quartered his division in the village of Chalco. On the 13th Pillow arrived, and was located at the hacienda of Chimalpa, some few miles beyond Worth's position.

While his army was concentrating, General Scott was studying the solution of the problem of the military operations by which the end of the war was to be accomplished.

On the 12th El Peñon was reconnoitered, and its strength was fully discovered. The American reconnoitering officers approached so close that conversation was practicable, and a Mexican, proud in the strength of his position and the war-like preparation by which he was surrounded, jumped upon the parapets, and shouted to the observers



that all was ready for their reception. The answer was as cool as his vaunt, and he was warned not to be in too great haste—that all would be accomplished in due time.

In the opinion of the engineers, El Peñon could be taken with the loss of three thousand men, which was equivalent to the opinion that it was impregnable; for the army, after having sustained such a loss, would have been in no condition to have forced the strong interior defenses of the city, even with the prestige of victory.

On the 13th another reconnoissance was pushed upon the route by Mexicalcingo. The operation was conducted by Brevet Brigadier-general Smith, and was successful, inasmuch as good positions for observation were obtained, the reconnoissance effected, and the troops returned, without disaster, to their encampment. It has been characterized by General Scott, it is said, as the most daring reconnoissance of the whole war; and not without reason, for the small corps of which the escort was composed passed within close proximity of El Peñon, and, having left it far in the rear, advanced to within a short distance of Mexicalcingo. By thus doing, it was exposed to be shut up upon the narrow causeway, and to the necessity of fighting under every disadvantage, should the enemy issue in any force from El Peñon, and occupy the road in its rear.

Had such an event been looked for and guarded against, the reconnoissance would have had some-

thing more to recommend it than the courage of its executors. Twiggs's remaining troops might have been in hand, and Quitman's in readiness to march from Buena Vista. In that case, had the enemy taken advantage of the situation of the escort to attempt its destruction, there would have been the probability of bringing on an engagement outside of his strong positions, and the result of such an encounter was not by any means problematical; but every thing was left to depend upon the skill and bravery of the officers and troops of the party, and upon the known inactivity of the Mexicans. No very positive preparations were made to take advantage of a movement from Santa Anna's head-quarters, or to afford any assistance to Smith in case of a sudden emergency. The troops, for the most part, remained quiet in their camps; and, so far from the general-in-chief being in position to superintend any operations, should there have arisen either a necessity or an opportunity for action, at the time of the reconnaissance he was at Chalco, arranging a plan of a partial movement with General Worth.

Mexican scouts had been sent over the route around Lake Chalco, and had confirmed the belief which General Scott had entertained, that the passage in that direction was quite difficult, if not impracticable. At that time the information of the general was to the effect that the road was good to the town of Tuiscingo, and thence practicable to the town of Tuliahualco, though par-

tially under water, by the causeway between the places, and rough and difficult by a road *south of* the lake. It was thought, though erroneously, that there was a direct, though rough road, from that point to San Augustin Tlapam, on the Acapulco road. A smoother road was known to pass by the shore of the lake to the town of Xochomilco, but was thought to be interrupted by the rise of the lake.\*

Although the route was considered so far impracticable as to forbid the attempt to move on it with the whole strength of the army, with its heavy artillery and trains, yet it was thought probably practicable for the movement of a single division, and that the passage by such a force could be made good with the assistance of water transportation for some of the heavier baggage and material around those parts of the road under water. Water transportation, to a certain extent, was at hand, in the shape of Mexican market-boats, which had been secured at Chalco. General Worth's division was the one which was to make this movement, had it been made, and was to operate in the Mexican rear while the main army attacked the positions in front.

Worth objected to the separation of his division

\* Memoranda concerning the Chalco route, given on the 14th of August by Captain R. E. Lee, of the engineers, at the time on duty at General Scott's head-quarters, and subsequently acting chief engineer of the army, to Captain J. L. Mason, of the engineers, on duty with General Worth, for the guidance of the latter in his movement around Lake Chalco. See Appendix, No. 1.



from the remainder of the army upon this experimental expedition, although there was no man in the army better qualified or more anxious to exercise a separate command. He believed that the route was practicable for the whole army; which, indeed, it must have been, if it were practicable for his division. The movements were not definitely arranged or ordered on the 13th, although they were under contemplation. In the mean time, no reconnaissance had been made over the southern route by American officers, and it is highly probable that none would ever have been made, had not Lieutenant-colonel Duncan, who was intimate at Worth's head-quarters, and whose views in relation to the proposed operations fully coincided with those of that general, volunteered to make a reconnaissance on the following day. Worth applied for permission to General Scott; and although he believed that the report of the Mexican spies was in the main accurate, and that the reconnaissance was unnecessary in some degree, yet he gave his consent, and ordered it. At five o'clock on the morning of the 14th, Duncan started with a strong escort and supporting force to go over the route as far as Tuliahualco.

In observing the position of the American army in the valley of Mexico, and the numerous obstacles which were to be encountered before success could be obtained, even to the achievement which General Santa Anna had intimated was necessary before he could or would appoint commissioners to

treat for peace, the want of heavy ammunition was most apparent. Having learned of the existence of a foundry near the village of Mira Flores, on the slope of the mountain, on the 13th General Scott sent an aid-de-camp, with an escort of infantry and cavalry, to examine the establishment, and ascertain its capacity for casting bullets in case they should be required. The reconnaissance was not effected, however, for the foundry was some distance beyond the village, and, in consequence, the infantry halted there, while the staff officer and the cavalry proceeded on. The whole country in the vicinity was swarming with guerillas, only waiting an opportunity for plundering, if it could be effected with any thing like impunity. Seeing a small party of cavalry, one of these bands endeavored to cut it off while separated from the infantry of the escort, and, indeed, did. On finding his situation dangerous, the aid-de-camp, Lieutenant Hamilton, turned to rejoin the infantry, and, coming in collision with the enemy, a scrambling skirmish ensued. The dragoons were mostly recruits, and, with the exception of Hamilton, the officers were inexperienced. He called on the men to follow him, and rode straight at the guerilla, but he was unsupported for a time in the midst of the enemy, and was dangerously wounded before the party came to its work. Nevertheless, he got through, and, having reached Mira Flores, gave information to the commander of the infantry. He started at once to the scene of the skirmish, but met the dra-

goons upon the edge of the town. They had succeeded in passing, for the guerilla had fled so soon as any determined resistance in force had been demonstrated.

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On the morning of the 14th a meeting of general officers was held at Ayotla. General Scott had arranged his plan of attack, although, as he said, he did not consider it unalterable, should Colonel Duncan's reconnaissance prove that the route south of Lake Chalco was practicable. That, however, was considered an exceedingly doubtful event, and, without placing any reliance upon it, General Scott gave his orders and explained his views. Generals Worth, Pillow, Quitman, and Cadwalader were present, and received instructions for their guidance. The plan was that which had been under consideration on the previous days, and Mexicalcingo was to be the immediate and principal point of attack. Three divisions were to operate along the causeway, while Worth was to attempt the passage around the south of the lake, and, if his movement were successful, to operate against the rear of the position, or other point of Mexican defense.

It was a plan of no easy execution, and objectionable under every point of view from which it can be considered. In the first place, the detachment of a division of troops by a difficult route of over twenty miles, but partially known, was ex-

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ceedingly hazardous to the safety of the corps, and of doubtful expediency, even if it were left entirely out of consideration ; for it is rare indeed that a detached corps can arrive at the proposed point of attack in time for any concert of action, when the point on which it is directed is out of view of the forces with which it is intended to assault in front. Unless this fortunate agreement of movement took place, of course the two portions of the American army must have attacked in detail. Whether, had they attacked in such manner, Worth's small numerical force would have availed any thing for effective assault, may well be doubted, in consideration of the numerous obstacles which he must have encountered. The rear of Mexicalcingo was almost entirely unknown ; and, had Worth even been successful in carrying a position, he would have been cut off from the remainder of the army, unless, indeed, he carried the whole line of works, which was neither anticipated nor directed. Had it been intended to have modeled upon General Taylor's operations at Monterey (and the contemplated movement of Worth's division was of the same character with that which he led at that place, except that there the field of operations was smaller and the route fully known), a little reference would have shown the inconveniences, not to say dangers, arising from the want of "concert of action." Indeed, the movement was in opposition to all true principles of war, and every authority upon military operations would unite in condemn-

ing it in the abstract. The circumstances which would justify a departure from the rules of the art to so great a degree had no place in the situation of the American army.

Had it been operating in its own country, with the routes well understood by its own officers, and unknown to the enemy; had it been in large numerical force, and in possession of positions affording good opportunity for observation, the attempt would have been hazardous; but, by the genius of the commanders and the bravery of the troops, success might have been hoped for. Such movements have been made by great captains, but, whenever they have been successful, it has been owing purely to fortuitous circumstances or some known disadvantage in the position of the enemy.

In this case every advantage was known to be with the Mexicans. They had strong defensive positions, overwhelming odds in numbers, powerful batteries, and all-commanding positions. Not even the semblance of an advantage was with the Americans, unless it was looked for in the understanding with Santa Anna, and the hope that, for winning the million of dollars, he would allow the easy capture of his outworks. It is evident that full dependence was not placed upon his hints and promises, and if it had been, the policy of leaving more to the magnanimity of the Mexican general, even when stimulated by his avarice, may well have been doubted. Moreover, in such case, there was

no necessity of sending Worth's division on a separate experiment.

The route by which the three divisions were to attack in front was one which rendered their operations no less hazardous. The narrow causeway which was the only approach to Mexicalcingo would admit of the maneuvers of but a small number of troops against the enemy's position. It was intended that Twiggs's division should be in advance, Quitman's to be in support, and Pillow's to be the rear guard. The baggage trains of the three divisions were to have been along the road between them, and in this order it was intended to storm and carry Mexicalcingo from the front. The nature of its defenses has been noticed, and truly it was no bad compliment to American soldiers that they were expected to achieve a victory under such circumstances over superior numbers, strongly fortified and armed.

The ground to the right and left being most difficult, if not impracticable, from its boggy nature, and being entirely impracticable for artillery, the positions must have been forced, if forced at all, by direct assault along the causeway, aided by the fire of such heavy guns as could be brought into battery. The siege train of the American army was very small, and what the result of a cannonade would have been can easily be imagined, when only two twenty-four pounders and two eight-inch howitzers could have been planted to bear upon the lines. Had these been protected at all, they



must have been by epaulements hastily thrown up under fire, and the supply of ammunition was exceedingly limited.

The works of the enemy were solidly constructed and well located; he could have brought an immensely superior weight of metal to bear upon the little battery; and in this connection it should be remembered, that, in the practice of fixed artillery, his gunners had proved themselves but little inferior, if any, to the best.

Some of the difficulties of the assault in front have been noticed, and the situation of the rear guard may be also spoken of. Shut up upon the narrow causeway by the intrenchments in front, the army was exposed to be shut up in rear also at the option of Santa Anna; for he could issue in force from El Peñon so soon as the engagement had fairly commenced at Mexicalcingo, and, by occupying the firm ground to the east of the road, attack the rear guard from an advantageous position; or he could await the result of the action in front, and stand ready to beat back his enemy in case he attempted to retreat.

In the mean time, the narrow road, encumbered with wagons, would have forbidden any thing like freedom of communication among the American troops, and it would only have needed the destruction of a few animals of the trains, by artillery at long range, to have thrown every thing into confusion. Certainly, in such case, there could have been no other guarantee of success for extrica-

tion from their perilous position than that of the bravery of the troops unaided by skillful guidance.

It may have been that reliance was placed upon the bad quality of the Mexican troops, and the inaptitude of their commanders to seize an offered advantage. This certainly could have been depended upon to an extent, and was when General Scott marched from Puebla with an army of 10,000 to attack and capture a city of 180,000 inhabitants, defended by 35,000 soldiers. Whether it was well to count further upon Mexican imbecility may be considered questionable. Dependence upon the errors of an enemy is never safe, and certainly, if he is prone to commit them, it is but a small reason why a general should commit them himself.

The picture of the dangers attending the proposed movement of the American army on Mexicalcingo, and of Worth's division around Lake Chalco, may perhaps be too highly drawn; but such views were entertained by a great number of intelligent and experienced officers at the time the preliminary orders were issued. In fact, but few who knew the position of affairs, or any thing of the geography of the country, were satisfied with the plan. The very position of the army was dangerous enough, in the front of the strong numerical force of the enemy, his powerful batteries, and in the midst of a populous valley, the center of the enemy's country, without increasing the chance of disaster by operating in detachments, having no, or at

best most difficult, communications, against fixed points, between which the communications were easy.

The policy of the American general was certainly to operate against points of the enemy's line of defense in full force, and then, with the powerful energy of his troops, and the skill of his subordinate officers, he had all the chances of success which were to have been hoped for in the situation of affairs.

But certain it is that the attack on Mexicalcingo was determined upon, and that the orders for the preliminary movements of the troops for such purpose were issued. Pillow and Quitman were ordered to march their divisions to positions in advance of Ayotla on the 15th, and Pillow's staff officers even selected the ground for encampment for the following night. When the meeting broke up from head-quarters, Worth took with him the engineer and other general staff officers who were to accompany him, and they were furnished with memoranda containing all known data concerning the route which he was to pursue.

But on the evening of the 14th "*a different plan was resolved upon by General Scott, in consequence of information then received respecting the road round Lake Chalco, on the south side, which satisfied him that this route was not, as he had been led to believe, altogether impracticable for carts, in which case it would have been so à FORTIORI for his trains (numbering over one thousand wagons) and*



*heavy artillery.*"\* This information was the result of Colonel Duncan's reconnaissance. That officer had proceeded as far as Tuliahualco, and found the road to that point not only good, but, as a whole, excellent. Tuliahualco was within ten miles of San Augustin, and all accounts which he received agreed that the route between the two places was practicable. From partial observation from elevated positions, Duncan was of the opinion that the road was as good, if not better, than that which he had reconnoitered.† And, as a strong argument in favor of its practicability, it was considered that it could hardly be possible that two villages of the size should be within so short a distance of each other without a practicable communication.

Having returned from his reconnaissance, Duncan met Generals Worth and Pillow and their staff while on their way from head-quarters to their divisions, and informed them of the result of his observation. Both of those generals, and all with them, felt the importance of the information, and hoped that the proposed plan of operations would be changed, and that the movement would be made in the whole strength of the army to turn the city and attack it upon the southern and western fronts.

\* Mr. N. P. Trist to Mr. Buchanan, August 22d, 1847. Executive Document, No. 52, Senate, first Session of the thirtieth Congress. In this matter Mr. Trist is good authority, for he was, at the time of writing the quoted extract, and of the movement to which it relates, on terms of the closest intimacy with General Scott, and was living at his quarters with him.

† Lieutenant-colonel Duncan's Report of Reconnaissance. See Appendix, No. 2.

With a letter from Worth, inclosing his written report, and recommending the change, Duncan proceeded, on the evening of the 14th, to Ayotla; and the effect of his information was, that the orders issued in the morning were countermanded. Duncan returned to Chalco that night, and, having communicated an order to Worth to delay his movement, rode over to Chimalpa, and gave the same to Pillow from the general-in-chief. Quitman, however, was not informed of the change of intention, and on the morning of the 16th broke up from Buena Vista and marched for Ayotla, in obedience to his original instructions.

These facts, with reference to the discovery of the practicability of the Chalco route, and the orders and dispositions made by General Scott, are incontrovertible. It has been asserted that it was all along known to the general, and that the movement upon Mexicalcingo was undertaken in order to conceal his ultimate intention from the enemy.\* But the order has in it many evidences that it was given in good faith, and not intended as a stratagem. That idea might have suggested itself, and it might possibly have been hoped that the intention of the American general to assault Mexicalcingo becoming public, and known to Santa Anna, would cause him to collect and keep his force on the east of the city, while, by a sudden inversion, the American army moved around the lake and

\* Lieutenant-colonel Hitchcock's Letter. Executive Document, No. 65, Senate, first Session of the thirtieth Congress, p. 526.

appeared on the southern front. But the fact that Worth's division was ordered to attempt the route in any manner, shows clearly that no such idea was entertained by General Scott; for, had the Mexican president known of the approach of any force whatever, he would, in all probability, have guarded the road, or have kept a corps in observation, from which he could learn the approach of the American army in time to occupy and strengthen the southern positions and defenses.

Another statement which has been put forth to show that the general-in-chief had a knowledge of its practicability is, that he was informed, before General Worth's arrival in the valley, by a person who had been with Santa Anna in 1833, when his army turned the city by that route, and took with it its artillery and train.\* This, it was said, established its practicability; and it no doubt would have done so, had it not been that such information, if ever received, was false. Santa Anna never led an army by that route; but, on the occasion referred to, he did take the route by Mexicalcingo, which was not obstructed at the time, and appeared on the San Antonio causeway with his heavy artillery. Knowing that he had so moved, he took the best of good care that his enemy should not find it without an obstacle; and if a person who belonged to his army was specially sent to guide General Scott by the route which Santa Anna had

\* Lieutenant-colonel Hitchcock's Letter. Executive Document, No. 65, Senate, first Session of the thirtieth Congress, p. 576.



marched over in 1833, up to the very difficult position of Mexicalcingo, it was only in keeping with the course of conduct which Santa Anna had always pursued, whenever he could impose upon the credulity and weakness of an adversary.

In ordinary circumstances and in ordinary warfare, the movement around Lake Chalco would have been dangerous in the extreme, for it abandoned all communication, and left a long and narrow, and in some places, as was afterward apparent, dangerous defile in rear of the American army. Every thing was placed in the hazard of the battle by the movement, and retreat, in case of ill success, was out of the question. But the movement on Mexicalcingo was no less hazardous in such event, and, besides, there was the positive certainty of the greatest difficulty in the front; and as for the impracticability of the retreat, such had been the character of all or nearly all the operations of the war, owing either to the action of general officers, or that of authorities at Washington, or the force of circumstances, or all combined. As such was the case, and an "outwork" at least was the object of the movement, it certainly was advisable to take some other than either El Peñon or Mexicalcingo. And, under all the circumstances of the case, none can find cause to censure the American general because he countermanded his first orders, and directed the movement around Lake Chalco, when he received information that it was not impracticable, as he had been led to believe.

The march was commenced on the evening of the 15th. Worth's division broke up from Chalco, and, passing Pillow's at Chimalpa, proceeded some distance on the route before dark. Pillow followed him early on the following morning. Quitman, who returned from Ayotla and came to Chalco on the 15th, soon followed him. On the same morning Twiggs struck his camp at Ayotla, and moved upon Chalco. Having put his troops in march in this order, General Scott took position with Pillow, to be within easy communication with front and rear.

During the 15th pickets from Alvarez's corps had been advanced to within a short distance of the American positions. That commander had undoubtedly advanced upon learning of Quitman's movement from Buena Vista, and on the night of the 15th he was in position to intercept the passage of Twiggs's division to the main body of the army.

When Twiggs moved from Ayotla, Alvarez formed his troops with a demonstration of purpose of opposing his movement, and of cutting him off; and certainly he had every opportunity of inflicting a severe loss and annoyance, if not of effecting the purpose, had his Pintos been any thing but robber bands, or he aught else than a fit leader of such a worthless crew. He had possession of the angle of the road where Twiggs was obliged to turn off to Chalco, and several strong buildings, of the hacienda of Oka Laka, were in the vicinity. His

force, at the lowest estimate, was of over 6000 men, of which 1500 were cavalry. The Mexican line was formed in good position and imposing array. Twiggs formed his line also, and advanced. Alvarez only waited for a few shots from Taylor's battery, when he retreated beyond range, and left the passage entirely unobstructed. Twiggs arrived at Chalco without further molestation.\*

The movement in advance progressed, but it was not rapid, as each division was accompanied by its train and artillery, and the whole work of clearing any obstructions, as well as forcing any occupied position, was thrown upon the advanced division.

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## CHAPTER VII.

Santa Anna's Movement from El Peñon to the South and West of the Capital—Preparations for Defense in that Quarter—Movement of Valencia to San Angel—Differences between Valencia and Santa Anna—Arrival of American Army at San Augustin—Reconnaissance in front of San Antonio—Reconnaissance in Direction of Padierna—Movements ordered by General Scott on the Night of August 18th—Advance of Pillow's Division—Communications and Orders—Advance of Twiggs's Division—BATTLE OF CONTRERAS—Retreat of Santa Anna—Movement of American Army to Coyacan—General Scott's Orders and Dispositions.

So soon as General Santa Anna had become convinced that General Scott was moving his army by the route south of Lake Chalco, he turned his atten-

\* General Twiggs's Report. Executive Document, No. 1, Senate, first Session of the thirtieth Congress, Appendix to the Report to the Secretary of War, p. 28.



tion to the points of defense on the south and west of the city. Withdrawing the greater portion of his troops and several pieces of artillery from El Peñon and Mexicalcingo, he fixed his head-quarters at the hacienda of San Antonio, and at once labored to finish the lines of defense in that vicinity. His attention was also given to interior works, which would obstruct the direct passage of the American army by the main road, in case the position at San Antonio were forced. Fortifications were begun at the bridge and church of Churubusco, some four miles south of the city. He proceeded some distance on the route by which the American army was advancing, and, having aroused the inhabitants of some neighboring Indian villages, caused several ditches to be cut across the road in its lowest part, and at a point where it turned a sharp angle between the mountain and the marshy shores of the lake, to be filled with a mass of heavy rocks rolled from the sides of the mountain, which completely obstructed the passage for any train. No direct opposition was ordered or attempted, except that a few guerillas were stationed on the heights, behind hastily-constructed intrenchments. Having made these arrangements to delay his adversary, the Mexican president returned to give his attention to the positions at San Antonio and Churubusco, for there he determined to make his principal defense.

The works of the exterior line about San Antonio could be turned only by the Pedregal, which

was considered nearly, if not quite impracticable. The only path which led through it was the mule-path west from San Augustin, by the rancho of Padierna, to the road from the factory of Contreras, past the villages of San Geronimo and San Angel, to the capital. This path was savagely rugged and difficult; but, nevertheless, Santa Anna intended to guard against its use by the American army, in case General Scott declined assaulting San Antonio.

With that object in view, when he was about to break up his head-quarters at El Peñon, he had ordered General Valencia to march his whole division, cavalry, infantry, and artillery, to the town of San Angel, and to dispute the passage, should it be attempted. Valencia obeyed the order, but, when he arrived at San Angel, protested earnestly against being placed in such a position, where, as he said, he would be deprived of all opportunity of assisting in the defense of the capital, and where, by his advance, the approaches of the roads of El Niño Perdido and Piedad were left open to the American army, in case it forced San Antonio.

His objections were without reason so long as the position at San Antonio was made good; and, indeed, the necessity of a corps of observation about San Angel was of paramount importance under the circumstances. Santa Anna, therefore, at first refused to permit any change in the dispositions. Valencia insisted that he should be allowed to change his head-quarters to the vicinity of those

of the main army, where he could cover the open roads of El Niño Perdido and Piedad. Finally, on the 18th of August, Santa Anna ordered him to fall back to the village of Coyacan, the position which Valencia had designated, and to send his artillery to the fortifications at the bridge and church of Churubusco, which were then in a fair state of completion.\*

This shuffling between the president and the general doubtless had its origin in something else than the mere military points of the discussion. It will be recollected that Valencia had resigned his command before the battle of La Angostura, and had not taken service until a few months previous to the American advance upon the capital. His feelings were bitterly hostile to Santa Anna, although, as is usual in Mexican affairs, the enmity between them was concealed by special courtesy in their communications. It was currently spoken of in Mexico soon after, that many general officers had formed the plan of giving the supreme command of the army to Valencia, and there is no doubt that he desired it. Hence a motive for his wish to be with the main army, and a motive for that of Santa Anna that he should be detached. The subsequent conduct of General Valencia would go to show that a want of nerve had perhaps something to do with the formation of his desires. But while, in the midst of insubordination and intrigue,

\* Correspondence between Generals Valencia and Santa Anna, published in the *Diario del Gobierno*, August 21st and 22d, 1847.



Santa Anna arranged his defense, the American army continued its advance.

Upon coming in sight of the guerillas, which had been posted to annoy his movement, Worth sent a battalion of light troops up the mountain, and, having delivered a harmless scattering fire, the enemy fled without resistance. Having arrived at the barricade of rocks, the troops were set to work in clearing the road. Learning that the Indian inhabitants of the villages were still in their dwellings, Worth turned them out, and set them to work for the same purpose.

The poor Indians, accustomed from their first knowledge of public affairs to be the sport of contending factions, saw in the advance of the American army but the movement of another pronunciado, and commenced the labor of clearing the road with as much good will as they had manifested in obstructing it. Indeed, many seemed to take it as an excellent jest that they were employed by one party to do away the work which the other had made them accomplish on the previous day.

In a short time the road was cleared and the passage open. By noon on the 17th Worth's advance was in the town of San Augustin. His train could not proceed so rapidly over the difficult portions of the road, and it was not until toward night that it cleared the defiles. On this account the progress of the rear divisions was very slow, and it was with great difficulty that Pillow that night reached the village of Xochomilco, some four miles in rear of

San Augustin. Quitman and Twiggs were still several miles in rear of him. The head-quarters were at Xochomilco.

On the morning of the 18th Pillow advanced to San Augustin, and Quitman and Twiggs approached to its close vicinity. General Scott fixed his head-quarters in the town, and sent Worth in advance upon the San Antonio road to cover reconnaissances in that direction. Worth seized and occupied the hacienda of Coapa, within long range of San Antonio, and the day was spent in observation. The enemy kept up a desultory fire upon the reconnoitering parties from his heavy guns, which severely wounded a guide, and killed Captain Thornton, of the second dragoons, who commanded the immediate escort.

His connection with the service during the Mexican war had been eventful, though melancholy. The capture of his small squadron upon the Rio Grande had been the first decided blow of the enemy, and was the signal for the commencement of the war. Much blame had been attributed to him, and for the result of the affair he had been placed before a court-martial. The finding of the court had almost entirely exonerated him, but the very fact of disaster befalling the troops under his leading, although none doubted the brave devotion with which he had encountered danger, had preyed upon his chivalric spirit, and increased the ravages of a disease which was wearing out his life. He had evidently but a few more weeks to

live, yet he kept in his saddle, and failed not in any portion of his duty. He met a soldier's fate with characteristic bravery. Indeed, his gallant spirit would have chosen such a lot, had it been possible, rather than to have awaited the natural summons of the final messenger. As his misfortune had been the commencement of the war, so, by his death, he was the first victim of the American army in the bloody conflicts which were to ensue before the accomplishment of the gigantic undertaking of the conquest of the ancient Mexican capital.

While the reconnaissances in front of San Antonio were progressing, another was ordered by General Scott in the direction of the mule-path by Padierna. The object was to ascertain the possibility of making a road which would be practicable for the artillery and trains of the American army, in case the positions at San Antonio were found to be too formidable to be assaulted.

A battalion of infantry and a troop of horse composed the escort. Captain Lee, who conducted the reconnaissance, proceeded as far as the hill of Zacatepec, on the edge of the Pedregal. From that point he could overlook the proposed route, and his observation induced him to believe that it was practicable, with labor, from thence to the main road to San Angel. His opinion was positive of its practicability as far as he proceeded.

In the mean time General Valencia had advanced from San Angel, and commenced fortify-



ing a camp which commanded the debouch of the path into the main road. His advanced parties of skirmishers were located in the Pedregal. These became engaged with Lee's escort, and having killed a horse, and suffered a loss of some dozen men in killed and wounded, and five prisoners, fell back. When Lee had finished his observations, Lieutenant-colonel Graham, who commanded, likewise fell back to San Augustin, and the Mexican skirmishers reoccupied the ground.

General Valencia, who on that morning had received the order which he had all along been soliciting at the hands of Santa Anna in relation to his position, acted with a most unaccountable caprice. On that morning he advanced from San Angel, passed San Geronimo, and took up his position in front of Padierna. In a note announcing to Santa Anna the affair with the American reconnoitering party, he boasted of having driven back the invaders with loss, and arrogated to himself all the honors of a victory. As for the position at Coyacan, which he had desired, he then considered it entirely useless, and averred that he was fully convinced that it was necessary for his division to remain where it was, in order to prevent the passage of the enemy in that direction. Santa Anna was totally unprepared for this contradiction, and repeated his order to fall back upon Coyacan. With an insubordination only equaled by his consummate folly, Valencia refused to obey, and in such a decided manner, that, in the exigent state of af-

fairs, and unable to enter at that moment into a controversy with him, Santa Anna gave up the point, and left him at liberty to hold his ground. But he warned him that disaster would probably ensue, and that upon him the responsibility must rest. Valencia, contradictory, stubbornly insubordinate, and stupid, was not to be deterred from persisting in his opposition at the moment when the death of an American horse and the retreat of a reconnoitering party had swelled him into a victorious general, and proudly answered that he would take the responsibility and defend the position. Accordingly, he kept it, and continued the fortifications.\*

The results of the reconnaissances in front of San Antonio and from the hill of Zacatepec were reported, and the plan of operations was discussed at the head-quarters of General Scott on the evening of the 18th. The various officers who had been engaged on the direct route differed in opinion in regard to the practicability of turning the fortified positions of the enemy. Even by those who thought that infantry could effect a passage through the Pedregal, it was conceded that it would be of exceeding difficulty, and the direct assault of San Antonio was considered as threatening too great a loss for its execution so long as there existed any chance of pursuing any other operation to the same end. At the time General Scott wished to gain the road

\* Correspondence between Generals Valencia and Santa Anna, published in the *Diario del Gobierno*, August 21st and 22d, 1847.

to Tacubaya and Chapultepec, which it was known led from San Antonio through Coyacan and Mixcoac. For that reason alone the possession of San Antonio was desirable. In the difficulties attending its capture, it was determined to attempt the passage of the Pedregal at its southwestern extremity.

The amount of resistance in that direction was not considered, nor, indeed, was it known how much was to be expected; for, although Captain Lee had fallen in with the enemy, his observations had been upon the topography of the country rather than upon the amount of direct opposition. He believed that it was practicable to make the road, and certain it is that the fortifications of Valencia's camp did not look very formidable when viewed from the hill of Zacatepec on the 18th. He reported the presence of a division of the enemy in that direction, and some opposition was of course to be anticipated. But the main thing looked to, in the first place, was the construction of the road, and to that duty Pillow's division was assigned. Twiggs's was to take the advance of Pillow's, and to protect the working parties from the annoyance of the enemy.

Accordingly, early on the morning of the 19th, Pillow marched from San Augustin, and, having passed over some two miles of the road as far as the hacienda of Peña Pobre, to which point the road was easily practicable, he detached working parties, under the superintendence of the engineers,



to accomplish his orders. While advancing thus far, he received information of a character not to be doubted of the strength of the enemy, and that he was at that time in the act of getting his heavy guns in position. At nearly the same time a staff officer arrived with intelligence of a like nature from General Scott, who had been observing the progress of his troops from the roof of his quarters in San Augustin. He had observed Valencia's position from that point, and sent to warn Pillow of the interruption which he might anticipate. Pillow sent back for definite instructions, and intimated his wish to push on with the infantry and dislodge the enemy before his heavy guns were in position, believing as he did that the character of the field of operations would prevent the effective use of either artillery or cavalry on the American side. Twiggs had not arrived with his division at the front, and at the time he was in person just entering San Augustin. Hoping that, in the event of an action, he would be enabled to handle his artillery and cavalry by the road which Pillow was engaged in making, General Scott gave positive orders upon the subject. Pillow was directed to finish the road as far as practicable without engaging the enemy. Twiggs was to move on and take the advance, and to brush away the enemy in case he became impertinent. In case the action became serious, Pillow was to support Twiggs with his whole division and assume the command.\*

\* Lieutenant Ripley's Testimony before the Court of Inquiry in the Case

These directions reached Pillow some time before Twiggs came up. As he was in proximity to the enemy, he threw several bodies of troops in advance of his working parties, and in person ascended the hill of Zacatepec for observation. By the time the road had been finished to that position, Twiggs had arrived, and, passing the working and covering parties of Pillow's troops, his division took the advance. As it ascended the slope of the hill of Zacatepec and came in view of the enemy, Valencia opened fire from his heavy guns and eight-inch howitzers.

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The range was over two thousand yards, but the eighteen pound shot and the shells were thrown to that distance. The practice of the Mexican artillery was admirable; but the distance was too great, and, saving a little confusion, the effect of the missiles was nothing. The road was continued for some distance along the hill-side; but, under the circumstances, the men were more in the humor for fighting than for working, and it was determined to commence the attack.

Twiggs was jealous of the superior rank of Pillow, and cared little to be under his command. He had expressed some dissatisfaction to General Scott before he left San Augustin; but General Scott, in answer to his scrupulous inquiries, had informed

him of an evident principle of action, that "the law must be obeyed."\* He listened with apparent impatience to any suggestions which were made to him, although he asseverated in round terms that *he* would take Valencia's position in a few hours. Pillow did not interfere with the position in advance to which General Scott had assigned Twiggs. He suggested that he should advance one of his brigades by the mule-path direct upon the intrenched camp, while the other should be detached, and endeavor to effect the passage of the Pedregal in the direction of the village of San Geronimo, which lay near the road from the camp to the city, and visibly cut off Valencia's communications and re-enforcements, if occupied. With these suggestions, and the assurance that his movements would be supported by Pillow's troops, Twiggs was ordered to move forward and to open the battle. As Taylor's field battery had not come forward, Pillow ordered Magruder's battery of six pounders and Callender's mountain howitzers to be placed under Twiggs's orders, to be used in case he should require artillery, or should find an opportunity of locating it in an effective position in his advance.†

Twiggs started at once with Smith's brigade, whose front was covered by the regiment of riflemen, deployed as skirmishers, and the artillery followed the movement. By leaving the path, Ma-

\* General Twiggs's Testimony. Executive Document, No. 65, Senate, first Session of the thirtieth Congress, p. 286.

† Lieutenant Ripley's Testimony and Finding of the Court. *Idem*, p. 182, 332.



gruder and Callender were enabled to proceed through some corn-fields which lay in the Pedregal, and, by breaking down the fences, to keep close in rear of the infantry, although the road thus opened was excessively rocky and difficult. The rifle regiment soon became engaged with the Mexican skirmishers, of which a large force was located in the Pedregal, and the small arms were in a short time at work noisily.

The position of the intrenched camp has been noticed in connection with the Pedregal and the road to the capital through the village of San Angel. The path across the field of lava led almost directly west from the hill of Zacatepec to the position. The camp was located on the slope of a hill which rose west of the main road, and immediately opposite to the junction of the path with it. The works by which it was defended were not in themselves very formidable. They were only breast-works on three sides, and a detached lunette in rear of the right; nor was the interior defiladed from a direct fire in the front. The strength and importance of the point consisted in its being upon the only direct route across the Pedregal, and on the amount of metal (twenty-two pieces) located for its defense, necessarily much greater than any which could be brought to bear upon it.

In front of the camp, and between it and the Pedregal, lay a deep and rugged ravine, the bed of a mountain torrent, which followed the road, and emptied into the Rio de Churubusco beyond San

Angel. North, at a distance of some eighteen hundred yards, and upon the direct road, lay the hacienda of Ansalda. Five hundred yards west of it was the village of San Geronimo, surrounded by orchards and cultivated fields, divided by hedges of maguey and walls of adobe. From the west of San Geronimo, a ravine of unequal depth extended southwest beyond the hill where Valencia had taken post, and northeast some distance beyond the village. Beyond the ravine and north of the village the ground was high and rolling, but perfectly practicable for the movements of any arm; but south it was broken by ridges and deep gulleys, which extended to the mountains, with here and there a position on which troops could operate. The only roads leading from the camp were the main one by Ansalda and by-paths leading through San Geronimo. Other paths there were, over the uneven ground, which were practicable for the movements of infantry and of Mexican cavalry, but these were all which could be depended upon for the movements of armies.

Valencia's infantry was located in and about the intrenched camp. His artillery was planted along its parapet, and the whole mass crowded together, with his large train of ammunition, inside and in vicinity of the works. His cavalry was disposed on either flank and to the rear beyond the ravine, while in the Pedregal, beyond the ravine in his front, his skirmishers were posted. He had utterly neglected to occupy the summit of the hill upon

the slope of which his camp was located, and which commanded it from a distance of three hundred yards. At the commencement of the action there was no apparent necessity for it, for doubtless he depended upon the natural difficulties of the Pedregal to secure himself from being turned on either flank.

So soon as General Smith had become fairly engaged in front with the Mexican skirmishers, Pillow in person ordered Colonel Riley, who had not been put in motion by Twiggs at the time, to attempt to pass the Pedregal in the direction of San Geronimo, and to operate on the flank and rear of the enemy.\* Riley moved in obedience to this order, and for some time after the head of his brigade had commenced the march the action continued noisy in the front.

The riflemen pressed hard upon the Mexican skirmishers, who retreated in the direction of the camp. The mountain howitzers were brought into action, and opened fire upon them, and Smith's whole brigade advanced rapidly.

After leaving the corn-fields, Magruder's field battery was brought along the rocky path with great difficulty, to a position selected by Captain Lee, within nine hundred yards of the camp, and thence opened a rapid fire.

The line of Mexican skirmishers being in such rapid retreat, and Smith's troops pressing so close-

\* Colonel Riley's Testimony and Finding of the Court. Executive Document, No 65, Senate, first Session of the thirtieth Congress, p. 147, 332.



ly in pursuit, and as, meanwhile, Valencia's guns were comparatively silent, it appeared at the hill of Zacatepec that Smith would carry the position in a pell-mell charge, and enter with the skirmishers. Riley's rear had not yet moved, although some time had elapsed since he had started with the advance. Pillow was watching the operation, and received a report that Smith was about carrying the position by direct assault, and it was suggested that he would require support. As, from Riley's slow progress, it was deemed exceedingly doubtful whether he could proceed to his assigned post in time, Pillow sent the staff officer who made the report with an order for him to support Smith.

Captain Deas was unable to proceed far in the Pedregal on horseback, but obtained a position whence he could observe the movement of the troops and the ground beyond. With the advance of his brigade Riley was far advanced into the Pedregal, and was advancing. The remainder was following him, though slowly, and much extended on account of the nature of the ground. It was seen that the ground in the vicinity of San Geronimo was favorable, as had been supposed, and Deas returned with the information to General Pillow.\*

In the mean time the American troops in front had halted; for, upon reaching the ravine, the Mexican skirmishers had descended, and Valencia's

\* Captain Deas's Testimony. Executive Document, No. 65, Senate, first Session of the thirtieth Congress, p. 97.

guns, being unmasked, had opened in full strength upon the American advance. Smith therefore drew back his troops under the shelter of the uneven ground, and, while Magruder and Callender kept up an unequal cannonade with their guns, howitzers, and rockets, reconnoitered the enemy's position from the close vicinity. As he had halted, and Riley's movement had by this time proved that it was practicable to cross the Pedregal with infantry, it was evident to Pillow that the main battle must be fought by such a movement.

He therefore ordered Cadwalader to follow Riley's route, to support him, and to cut off any reinforcements which might come to Valencia from the city. Cadwalader moved off at once in obedience to the order.\*

The cannonade in the front continued, and in the unequal contest the American artillery suffered severely. Indeed, it would have been totally demolished had it not been for its position, which was that of a hollow, having a rise of several feet between it and the enemy. This enabled the artillerists to load their pieces under comparative shelter, and to deliver the fire with short exposure. The caissons and limbers, with their horses, were located partially out of fire, behind the huge rocks in the vicinity. The American guns inflicted some damage upon the Mexican force; but the distance, too great for their caliber, did not allow any great

\* General Cadwalader's Testimony. Executive Document, No. 65, Senate, first Session of the thirtieth Congress, p. 83, 107.

effect; and, had they been once fully exposed, the immense superiority of the Mexican batteries would have overwhelmed them in an instant.

General Twiggs, who had followed the movement, and had been engaged in reconnoitering, sent to Pillow to request a supporting force for Smith's brigade. His messenger arrived at Pillow's position soon after Cadwalader had moved to the support of Riley. Pierce's brigade was at once ordered to the front; but, as it passed the foot of the hill, large masses of the enemy were discovered moving along the San Angel road from the direction of the capital. In this state of things, it was evident that Riley and Cadwalader would require support, and Morgan's regiment was detached from Pierce's brigade, and halted for a time at the foot of the hill.

With his two remaining regiments Pierce pressed rapidly forward. The Mexican batteries played rapidly upon his advance, but the troops were protected by the inequalities of the ground from the showers of shot and shell with which they were welcomed. Pierce was, however, temporarily disabled by the fall of his horse, which, stumbling in a cleft of the rocks, threw him heavily to the ground. Colonel Ransom, of the ninth, led the command, under guidance of the engineer officers who had accompanied Twiggs, to the right and front of Magruder's battery. In the route several patches of corn were rapidly traversed by the troops, within close range of the enemy's heavy guns, but



the advance was effected with small loss, as the Mexican fire was plunging, and the troops were partially concealed by the vegetation. The rancho of Padierna was seized during the movement, and the command, passing on, entered the deep ravine directly in front of the enemy's camp. Valencia, anticipating an assault, sent a force of infantry against it, which opened a heavy musketry fire; but, although it increased the noise of the battle, it had little other positive effect.

Soon after these troops had moved, the approach and movements of the re-enforcements upon the San Angel road became fully developed. Pillow therefore ordered Colonel Morgan to move his regiment (the fifteenth) at once to Cadwalader's support, and at the same time sent information to that general of the threatening movements of the enemy, and orders for him to give his attention to them.\* Morgan marched immediately.

At about this time General Scott arrived upon the field. Pillow had advised him of the commencement of the action through staff officers sent at different stages of the affair. The general-in-chief had not contemplated so serious an engagement in the direction in which it had occurred, and the whole spirit of his instructions to Pillow had been to delay the action so long as the work upon the road could be continued. He did not, however, countermand or disapprove of the dispo-

\* Testimony of Colonel Morgan and Captain Hooker. Executive Document, No. 65, Senate, first Session of the thirtieth Congress, p. 247, 163.

sitions or movements which had been made. Having left instructions for the defense of San Augustin, he ordered Shields's brigade to follow him, and proceeded at his leisure to the field.

Upon his arrival, all the troops were either in motion or already engaged, with the exception of Captain Taylor's field battery and some squadrons of dragoons, which, on account of the impracticable nature of the Pedregal, had been held in position at the foot of the hill of Zacatepec. Having learned the plan of attack and the general disposition of the troops from Pillow, General Scott expressed his high approval of them, and sat down to await the result of the battle.\* In the meanwhile he caused officers to be sent in search of a practicable route for artillery and cavalry across the Pedregal, which had been sought in vain before his arrival on the field.

The heavy column of Mexican re-enforcements continued to advance. Upon hearing the discharges of artillery from Valencia's position, Santa Anna had drawn troops from San Antonio, Churubusco, and the city of Mexico, to the number of 12,000 men, and marched by the San Angel road to the field. The large force was observed in its advance by the American generals upon the hill of Zacatepec, and created some alarm for the safety of the corps upon the right in the direction of San

\* Testimony of General Scott, Captain Hooker, Captain Ker, and others. Executive Document, No. 65, Senate, first Session of the thirtieth Congress, p. 73, 163, 184, 295.

Geronimo. While they watched the progress of the movement, a note was received from Cadwalader, informing Pillow that he was threatened with a superior force, and requesting support. The danger was in a measure lessened, as it was then apparent that Cadwalader was aware of his situation; and as Morgan was already en route, and Shields soon would be, the probability was that the junction of the re-enforcements with Valencia's troops would be checked.

In the front the action had subsided into an occasional cannonade, and a few scattering volleys which the Mexican troops from time to time directed at the battalions in the ravine. General Smith had in the mean while reconnoitered the right of the Mexican positions, with a view of attacking them in that direction; but he gave up the idea, and, hearing of the approach of the Mexican re-enforcements, he determined to extend to his own right, and operate in that quarter. Of the disposition of the forces in his immediate vicinity he was entirely ignorant, not having seen Twiggs's since the commencement of the action; nor did he know that the ninth and twelfth regiments were near him, although they had been applied for and ordered to the front to support him. He recalled his scattered parties, and, having detailed several companies of infantry and rifles as an immediate support to Magruder's battery, he commenced his movement. Soon after, he sent information of his intentions to the general-in-chief, and



delayed the march for a time to await his orders in case he disapproved of it. None arrived, and he continued on his route.\*

Having reached the road in the vicinity of San Geronimo, Riley collected his troops as they came out of the Pedregal, and advanced. The fourth regiment of artillery (acting as infantry) was in the front, and, crossing the ravine by the road side, threw out a company of skirmishers, which fell in with and captured a small pack-mule train, on its way, under escort of a party of lancers, to the enemy's camp. That regiment then proceeded on into the village of San Geronimo, where it was left to make a diligent search, while the remaining troops of the brigade continued. Valencia opened upon them with two or three heavy guns, but the thick foliage of the trees hid the Americans from view, and the fire was uncertain and inefficient.

Riley passed through the village with the second regiment of infantry, and moved on beyond the ravines to the ground upon its northwest. He was then in position to observe the country in rear of the intrenched camp, and he at once detached staff officers, with small escorts of infantry, upon that duty. In accomplishing it, they fell in with detachments of Valencia's cavalry, which had been stationed on the practicable ground beyond San Geronimo, and Torrejon, who commanded, brought up re-enforcements by the narrow paths through

\* General Smith's Testimony. Executive Document, No. 65, Senate, first Session of the thirtieth Congress, p. 99-106

the broken ground in rear of the intrenched camp, until the force of cavalry opposed to the small number of American infantry was formidable. The lancers attacked the companies which covered the reconnaissance, but were held in check until the regiment was reformed. In these affairs the Mexican general, Frontera, who advanced alone against his enemy, for his troops failed to follow, was killed.

Riley had expected to continue and attack the reverse of the camp, and, to support the second regiment, ordered forward the seventh infantry and fourth artillery.\* While he awaited their arrival, the enemy threatened a charge upon the second infantry, which was thrown into square to receive him. Nothing more than a demonstration was, however, made; and, in the mean time, the reinforcements, which were advancing under Santa Anna, had arrived in close vicinity of San Geronimo, and in sight. Not being assured of the presence of any other portion of the American army, and being fearful of the loss of his communications, Riley reduced the square, and, having been joined by the remainder of his command, fell back to the village, where he arrived about dark. Several events had taken place in the mean time.

Cadwalader's advance had reached the road some little time after Riley's rearmost troops had

\* Colonel Riley's Report. Executive Document, No. 1, House of Representatives, first Session of the thirtieth Congress, Appendix to the Secretary of War's Report, p. 85, and Colonel Riley's Testimony. Executive Document, No. 65, Senate, first Session of the thirtieth Congress, p. 148.

disappeared in the shrubbery and gardens of the village. Santa Anna was then parading his troops upon the high, open ground to the northwest of San Geronimo. The necessity of opposing his junction with Valencia was at once apparent; and, as the American troops collected as they emerged from the Pedregal, they were formed quickly in line of battle. The precise situation of affairs was unknown to Santa Anna, and the sudden appearance of Cadwalader's brigade, in so sturdy and obstinate an attitude, caused him to pause in his advance, and to send forward officers, with a strong escort, to reconnoiter. They came down upon a battalion of the eleventh infantry, partially concealed in the shrubbery, which, pouring in a volley, emptied several saddles, and the escort retreated.

As Cadwalader was not in communication with Riley at the time, and as he expected an immediate advance of the Mexican forces, he believed that his brigade would be obliged to encounter the overwhelming odds alone; wherefore, advancing into the village, he took up a strong position on the crest of the ravine which separated the forces, and awaited the commencement of the battle. Santa Anna was, however, in no humor to advance, and remained in observation. His masses continued to arrive until his full force of 12,000 men was on the field. Morgan's regiment came up during this while, and took post on Cadwalader's right.\*

\* General Cadwalader's Testimony. Executive Document, No. 65, Senate, first Session of the thirtieth Congress, p. 82, 107.



Some time afterward, Smith, who had made good the passage of the Pedregal, came up and posted his troops still upon the right. Cadwalader extended his left, to make room for the re-enforcement. Reconnoitering officers were still thrown out from the arriving Mexican forces; and one, believing the road to be clear, as Cadwalader had passed it, ran upon Smith's advance just as he came out. Much to his surprise and annoyance, he found himself a prisoner.

Smith at once assumed command of all the forces west of the Pedregal. The point was not contested by Cadwalader, though it might well have been, for Smith's rank of brigadier was a brevet, and he had no assignment to duty by the order of the President according to that rank. Strictly, he had no right, in the absence of such assignment, to assume command over an officer of the full rank of brigadier general, no matter what the date of his commission may have been.

Without paying any attention to Valencia other than by the occupation of several houses and the church of the village, which might impede an attack upon his rear, Smith turned his attention to the passage of the ravine in front, with the design of falling upon Santa Anna's whole force. The design was exceedingly bold, but of doubtful expediency in the state of affairs which existed. Smith had no knowledge of Riley's position, and he did not trouble himself about it until the colonel, having retired into the village, fell in with the troops

which were confronting Santa Anna.\* Then he was ordered to form his brigade for the assault; but the day was far spent, and, after consideration, the intention of attacking was given up; and very properly too, for it would have been hazardous in the extreme to have commenced operations against such odds, over difficult ground, while so little daylight remained.

Santa Anna, meanwhile, had brought up a light battery and commenced a cannonade. It was of no effect, as the American troops stood fast in their defensive positions, partially hidden and protected. He had communicated, through a staff officer, by a very circuitous route, with General Valencia. As he was not yet captured, and had checked the direct advance of the American troops by the overwhelming fire of his artillery, Valencia felt exceeding self-satisfaction, and sent tidings of victory to his chief. When he received the news, Santa Anna, accompanied by a brilliant staff, rode along the lines, and announced the success in a flowery harangue.

The troops were willing enough to celebrate a victory, and pealed forth their shouts in reply. The cries of "Viva el General Valencia!" "Viva la republica Mexicana!" followed by the swelling notes of the numerous bands of the Mexican army, rose over the valley, and were heard even at the position of the American general-in-chief, on the hill of Zacatepec.

\* General Smith's and General Cadwalader's Testimony. Executive Document, No. 65, Senate, first Session of the thirtieth Congress, p. 85, 100.

There the progress of events had been watched with anxiety, but without dread ; for so strong was the confidence reposed in the valor of American soldiers, that it was believed that the result of the conflict was in no way doubtful. It was seen that the general disposition of the troops was good, and that, by the occupation of the village of San Geronimo, Valencia was isolated, and must fall so soon as a sufficient force was in position to enable a strong detachment to fall upon his rear, while the remainder held Santa Anna in check. But the difficulty was in communicating over the savage and broken field, and the fear was that affairs could not be brought to a crisis before dark.

As San Geronimo had become the point of interest, General Shields's brigade was ordered thither so soon as it came up from San Augustin. No path had been discovered practicable for the cavalry, and, with Taylor's battery, it remained in position at the foot of the hill.

In front, Valencia kept up a sullen and uncertain cannonade whenever the American troops showed themselves. It was replied to at intervals by the light pieces of Magruder's battery, and an occasional discharge of rockets.

General Twiggs had been in observation throughout the afternoon, and at last sent word to General Scott that he had selected a point of attack from the front of the enemy's intrenchments ; but the nature of his message showed that he was ignorant of the state of affairs, as he necessarily was from



his position. In fact, he knew not the position of the very brigade with which he had entered the action, and, of course, his message was unheeded. Had it been intended or wished to make the attack according to the suggestion, it would have been impossible, for the want of troops. The main body of the army was already at San Geronimo, and time would have been required, besides being hazardous, to bring up any of Worth's troops from Coapa.

Affairs in the front were therefore left to take their course, and it became evident that much more could not be accomplished before night. In the difficulty of communication, and the absence of a superior officer on the west of the Pedregal, Pillow, who had several times requested permission to join his troops, as General Scott was in position to direct the general operations, was finally ordered to find Twiggs, to cross the Pedregal with him, and assume command of the operations in that quarter. Pierce's two regiments and the batteries were left in front of the enemy.

Pillow started just before sundown, and, meeting with Twiggs, who was then returning from the front, both generals, with their staff, entered the Pedregal. Before leaving the mule-path in front of the camp, Pillow sent discretionary orders to Captain Magruder to withdraw his battery if he found he was having no positive effect upon the enemy, but advising him to wait for nightfall. Magruder, who was unsupported at the time, except by the few companies of infantry and rifles which General

Smith had left, and fearing that the enemy would take advantage of his movement to come down upon the American communications, decided upon holding his position, and requested an additional support of infantry. He was ignorant of the position of Pierce's troops, although they were in close proximity upon his right and front.

This want of information among the American officers, and the confusion in the disposition of the troops, which it is feared has been also apparent in the narrative, may serve to show the nature of the ground, and the almost utter impracticability of conducting military operations upon it. Certain it is, no description would suffice to make it as apparent to the reader as it was to those engaged on the 19th of August.

When night fell, the general dispositions of the troops of both armies were the following: Valencia held nearly his primitive position, for the parties of cavalry which had annoyed Riley's reconnoitering parties had fallen back to the vicinity of the intrenched camp. Smith, Cadwalader, and Riley occupied positions in the village of San Geronimo, a mile or so on his left flank. They cut his communication in force with Santa Anna, who retained his post on the high ground north and west of San Geronimo, confronting the American troops. Pierce's brigade and the American light batteries were in Valencia's front, guarding the path to the hill of Zacatepec. Shields's brigade was en route across the Pedregal, and one battery of American





# BATTLE OF CONTRERAS.

6 o'clock P. M. August 19<sup>th</sup> 1847.



light artillery and the cavalry remained, as throughout the action, at the foot of the hill.

Soon after sundown a cold, heavy rain set in, and the field was shrouded in almost total darkness. Generals Pillow and Twiggs persevered for several hours in the attempt to find their way to San Geronimo, but without success, for the ground on the west had no elevations which could mark the route in the darkness, or in a fitful glare of lightning which occasionally lit up the scene. After many fruitless endeavors to progress, which at one time brought them in close vicinity to the enemy, and during which General Twiggs was so hurt by falling into the clefts of the rock that he felt himself unable to proceed, it was decided to give up the attempt for the night as impracticable, and to report to the general-in-chief.

The return was a matter of less difficulty than to attempt to cross, for the hill of Zacatepec, looming up in the darkness, afforded a guide, uncertain, it is true, except when rendered visible by the lightning, but of much assistance. It was not until near eleven o'clock that the generals reached the former position of General Scott, and they then found that some hours before he had departed for San Augustin, whither they followed him.

The condition of affairs was, at the time of their arrival, the subject of General Scott's consideration. Captain Lee had arrived before them from General Smith's position, having earlier made his way across the Pedregal to the hill of Zacatepec.



Finding General Scott absent, he too had proceeded to San Augustin.

Having given up his intention of attacking Santa Anna, Smith had considered that of falling upon Valencia's rear during the night. Learning from Riley and his staff officers that the route was practicable, he determined to put it into execution.

Lee had been sent to inform General Scott of his determination, and to request that a demonstration should be made to favor his assault by the troops in front of the enemy. This movement was approved by General Scott, and General Twiggs and Captain Lee were sent to place Pierce's troops in position to make the proposed demonstration at three o'clock on the following morning, for that was the hour appointed for Smith's assault.\* General Scott ordered Pillow positively to remain at San Augustin during the night.†

The American troops in Valencia's front passed many hours of the night in utter ignorance of the state of affairs upon other parts of the field, and, in the uncomfortable condition in which they were, felt all the lowness of spirits which was an accompaniment to their apparently desperate situation.

Magruder's position was re-enforced soon after dark by a party of rifles, which had been engaged in skirmishing in the Pedregal, and became sepa-

\* Testimony of General Smith, Captain Lee, and General Scott. Executive Document, No. 65, Senate, first Session of the thirtieth Congress, p. 100, 75, 73.

† General Scott's Testimony. Idem, p. 73.



rated from its corps. The supporting troops of the batteries were advantageously posted on the flanks.

About nine o'clock, Colonel Ransom, who was in immediate command of the ninth and the battalion of the twelfth infantry, which had advanced into the ravine, being without orders, and believing himself entirely unsupported, fell back.

So soon as he evacuated his position, Valencia sent a battalion across the ravine to the rancho of Padierna, which was occupied by some fifty men of the twelfth. The Mexicans, who flattered themselves that the victory was already won, attacked with vigor, and seemed determined to succeed. Captain Craig, of the third infantry, who commanded the force supporting the batteries, led his men down to the support of the party in the rancho, and, attacking the Mexican battalion with quite as much good will and far more steadiness, drove it away and covered the retreat. Ransom, who was some distance on the right when the affair happened, soon after came in with his men, and over 1000 troops were in position about the batteries.

Toward midnight the moon shone out for a brief while, and the narrow road by which the batteries had advanced became visible. Captain Magruder then thought of availing himself of Pillow's permission to retire, to repair his losses and damages. Pierce, who, although quite lame, remained upon the field, opposed it for some time, and it was not until the moon was nearly down that he gave his

consent. The guns being about to recede, he ordered back the infantry also, and the position was about to be abandoned. The ninth and twelfth immediately followed Pierce to the hill of Zacatepec, leaving but the companies of infantry and rifles under Captain Craig to assist in removing the wounded and the batteries.

Shortly after the movement was commenced the moon went down, and it was with great difficulty that the battalions of infantry could traverse the narrow and rocky path with any thing like unity. As for the batteries and the troops with them, matters were far worse. Some wounded men were to be carried; the road, difficult at best, could not be seen in the darkness, and it was imprudent to use lanterns, which would have drawn the fire of the Mexican guns, while the Americans were perfectly exposed, without the power of mobility or of replying. The horses slipped and fell in the clefts of the rocks, guns and caissons capsized, and more damage was done to the materiel than had been sustained throughout the action. At last some considerable portion of the batteries arrived at the foot of the hill in a crippled state.

Before this occurred, General Twiggs and Captain Lee arrived from San Augustin. Twiggs remained for the night at the foot of the hill, while Lee conducted all the infantry under Ransom back to the position in the ravine which had been abandoned, in order to make the demonstration in favor of Smith's assault. The movement was accom-

plished without observation or opposition on the part of the enemy.

Santa Anna had not placed much dependence upon Valencia's boasted victory, as he saw no fruit of it, and that the American troops were still in the village of San Geronimo, in strong defensive positions. He sent another communication, by the same circuitous route traversed by his staff officer during the afternoon, ordering Valencia to spike his guns, destroy his military stores, and to make his retreat by the mountain paths, which were alone open to him. But, so long as Valencia retained his position, he was not to be convinced that he had not achieved a victory, or that any thing but success could result from a continuance of the battle.

He appears to have been the victim of the strangest infatuation; for, instead of asking succor from Santa Anna, or of entertaining for one moment the idea of following his advice, he indited a boastful dispatch, in which the achievement of a complete victory was pompously set forth, accompanied by many praises to the officers who had participated in the asserted triumph. It was announced that the miserable remnant of the North Americans was shut up in the Pedregal by the battalion of Aguascalientes and Torrejon's cavalry, which only awaited the return of light to fall on and complete their extermination.\* Whether Valencia was so stupidly vain as to believe all that he wrote is perhaps

\* Correspondence between Valencia and Santa Anna, published in the *Diario del Gobierno*.



doubtful ; for it may have been that he wished, by an early promulgation of his success, to hasten the pronunciamiento which was to place him in command, and, in his political aspirations, forgot the danger from the enemy. His general order of the evening of the 19th seemed to show that he believed himself almost, if not entirely, supreme, for he did his officers, almost without exception, the honor of conferring upon them brevets, which it might have been as well to have left to his government to bestow, even had they been deserved.

After the receipt of the dispatch, Santa Anna troubled himself no further about Valencia, but at once drew off his troops, with the exception of a corps of observation, from the heights north of San Geronimo, and silently retreated to San Angel.

In order to save Valencia from disgrace, he did not wish to undertake so hazardous an operation as that of attacking the American troops in their strong position at San Geronimo. To save his troops, he had given the order for his retreat ; but, as Valencia was stubborn, he left him to his fate, doubtless trusting to the issue of subsequent operations and diplomatic intrigue to insure his own triumph or safety. That fate he foresaw would be disastrous, but it is hardly probable that he saw the full extent of the danger to the Mexican cause, or that, unless the intrigues of Valencia's faction had been dangerous, he would have refrained from making some strong demonstration to avert the disaster. If it were so, it must be believed that Santa Anna

was acting in treachery to his country, and according to his implied promises in the Puebla negotiations at the time ; but subsequent events forbid the entertainment of such a belief.

The three American brigades which occupied San Geronimo at nightfall, laid on their arms during the greater part of the night, without any disturbance or movement. Shields, who had reached the main road an hour or so after dark, did not join the forces at the village until near twelve o'clock. Although the superior in rank, he did not assume the command ; and, as Cadwalader had waived the question, Smith made the dispositions for the movement.

He was ignorant of Santa Anna's retreat, and had intended to leave a detachment in occupation of the village to check the Mexican president, should he advance, while the main force should fall on Valencia's rear, and beat him from his position before Santa Anna could force a junction. Shields's arrival allowed him to take the whole strength of the three brigades, for that general posted his command in San Geronimo to oppose Santa Anna.

The route by which it was intended to move to the enemy's rear was re-examined by engineer and staff officers during the night, and at three o'clock the troops were aroused to commence the movement. Riley's brigade was in the advance, and led off by the flank. The night was so dark and the ground so difficult that it was not until near

daylight that its rear cleared the village. Cadwalader's then moved on in support, and was followed by Smith's brigade under Major Dimick.

By the time all of the troops of the assaulting force were in motion, Riley's advance was in position in the ravine to the rear and near the foot of the hill on which the camp was located. Its summit was entirely unoccupied, and Valencia had not discovered the movement. At day-dawn he had paid his attention to the positions which had been occupied on the previous evening, and had opened fire both on Ransom, who was keeping up a noisy musketry in front, and Shields, who occupied San Geronimo.

When Riley arrived near his position, he formed his brigade in line of battle, intending to move up the uneven slope, and over the ravines which were between him and the enemy, in that order; but Smith ordered him to form two columns of attack. In that formation his troops climbed the acclivity and moved to the assault. A little elevation still hid the movement from the view of the enemy, and a halt was made for the purpose of reforming the troops, in much disarray from the nature of the ground. In the interval, staff officers were sent forward to reconnoiter, who found that the enemy had just discovered the movement, and was turning his guns and disposing his infantry for resistance.

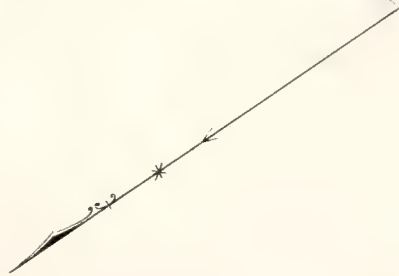
Riley at once deployed his leading divisions as skirmishers, and ordered the advance. His whole



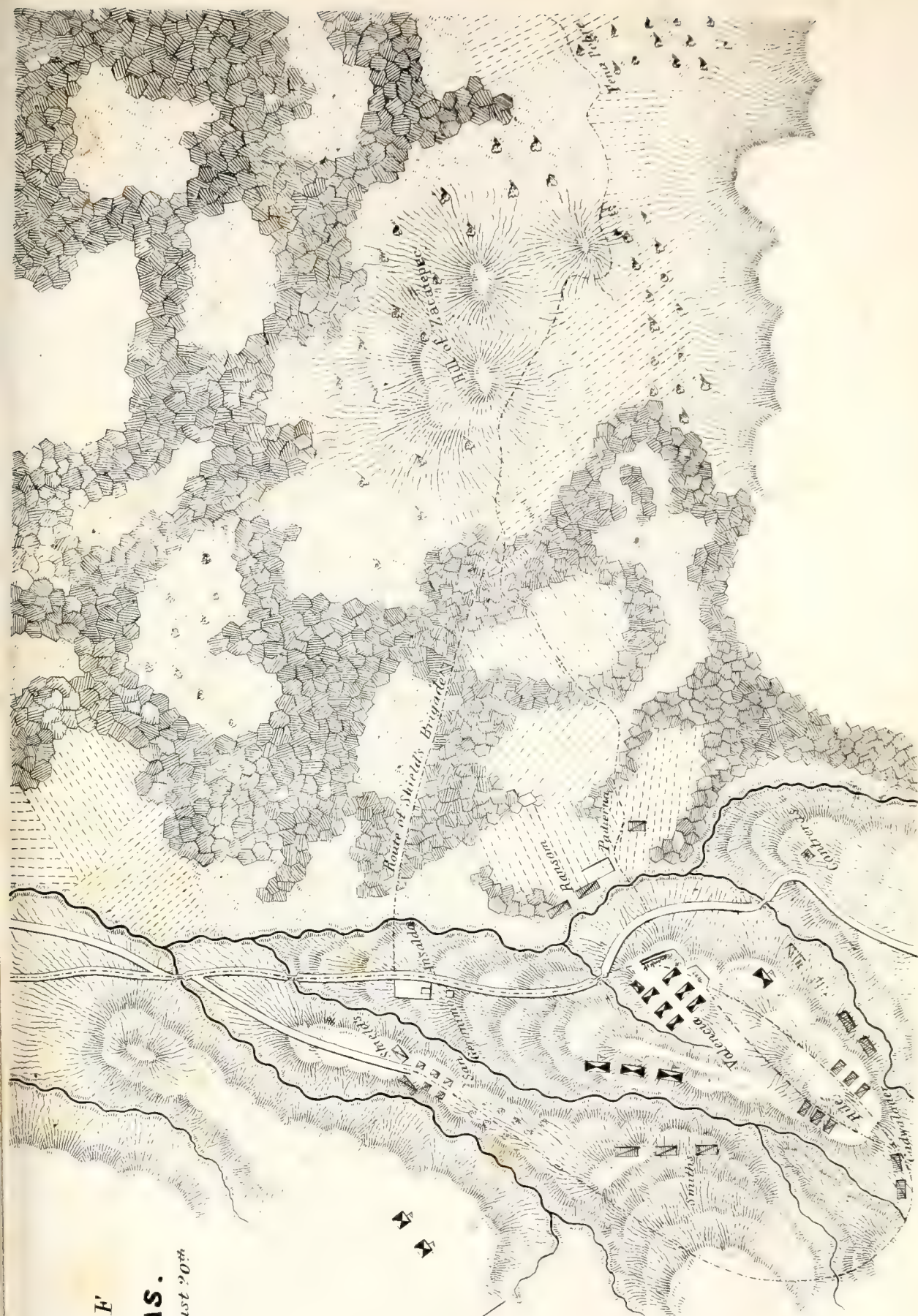
BATTLE OF

CONTRERAS.

6½ clock A. M. August 20<sup>th</sup>



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force soon became hotly engaged with the enemy, who served two guns upon it with rapidity, and received the shock with a noisy, rolling discharge of musketry. The aim was, however, inaccurate, and but little comparative loss was suffered. The advance was not retarded one instant, for the American troops, having delivered their fire, rushed down with loud shouts in a vigorous charge, and entered the intrenchments almost in a body.

During the advance, Cadwalader had wished to diverge from the route by a practicable path, and attack a large force of the enemy to the left and rear of the camp; but Smith objected to the movement. He therefore kept in close support to Riley. The voltigeur regiment and a portion of the eleventh regiment moved around the right of the leading brigade, and assaulted the southern front of the intrenchments, cutting off the retreat in that direction.

Smith, who was watching the progress of affairs, sent his own brigade by the path which Cadwalader had pointed out, and to fall on the enemy on the north, which it did vigorously.

From the moment the assault commenced, the Mexican troops were in most inextricable confusion. How, when, or where Valencia fled is a mystery. Certain it is that he went off with as much celerity as faded his fond anticipations of victory and honor. With him all others betook themselves to flight, which was not so easy of accomplishment, for the position was almost entire-



ly surrounded, though, strange to say, the Americans were the lesser number.

General Salas, who held a command in the division, has said that he endeavored to save the day, or at least to strike a blow for honor; but when he ordered Torrejon to lead his lancers to the charge, that general fled like a coward, and rode over his own infantry with his horsemen, throwing it into powerless disorder.\* Whether caused by the misconduct of the cavalry or other event, the rout was most complete. The mass of Mexican troops, yielding before Riley's vigorous charge, pressed upon by portions of Cadwalader's brigade on the right, and under fire of Ransom's troops in front, gave way, and fled headlong down the road in direction of San Angel. Many dispersed parties broke through the intervals of the American lines, which were necessarily large, and escaped through them to the mountains south and west of the position; but the greater portion, continuing on by the main road, fell in with the troops of Smith's brigade, who poured in such a fire as to cause terrific destruction. Those who passed this ordeal continued on. Some of the most advanced were successful in passing San Geronimo, for, during the battle, Shields had been giving attention to the Mexican party of observation on Santa Anna's position of the previous evening. This retired upon the decision of the battle at the intrenched camp. Shields's troops then occupied the road, obstructed the retreat, and

\* General Salas's Report.

those of the enemy there in flight threw down their arms and surrendered.

Valencia's division was totally destroyed as a military body. The loss in killed and wounded which it suffered was extremely severe, and could not have fallen short of two thousand men. The road toward Mexico, for more than a mile from the intrenched camp, was literally strewn with dead and wounded. Four general officers, Salas, Blanco, Garcia, and Mendoza, four colonels, thirty captains, a host of subalterns, and near one thousand rank and file, were made prisoners. The whole train of artillery belonging to the corps, consisting of twenty-two cannon of various calibers, with large stores of ammunition, fell into the hands of the victors. A special subject of congratulation was, that among the number were the only trophies of which Mexico could boast, the captured pieces of Angostura. They were seized by the fourth regiment of artillery, which, acting as infantry, formed part of Riley's column, and thus fortunately recovered the guns which had belonged to a company of the same regiment.

The whole Mexican transportation train, the military chest (not very large)—in fine, all the materiel of war in and about the position, were captured.

In all these complex operations, and with all the fire to which the American troops had been exposed, the overwhelming odds against them, and their, at times, apparently desperate situation, their

loss had been comparatively small. Not more than sixty had fallen, killed and wounded.\* But of the dead there were two officers, both young in rank, but of high character and reputation.

The youngest, Lieutenant Johnstone, of the first artillery, endeared to his associates by his good and noble qualities, and admired by all who knew him for his gallant bravery, fell mortally wounded by the stroke of an eighteen pounder while serving his guns on the evening of the 19th.

The other, Captain Hanson, of the seventh infantry, a gentleman of sterling worth and Christian virtue, died nobly in the assault of the morning of the 20th.

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It had been understood at General Scott's headquarters at San Augustin that the immediate assault upon the intrenched camp would take place at three o'clock in the morning. As it was known that it had not, and as no information had been received, much anxiety was felt for the fate of the battle. Pillow started at dawn for the scene of operations, under orders from Scott to resume the command, and conduct the operations according to his own judgment.

Worth was directed to detach one brigade on the route to the field, to be used as might be found necessary, while the other remained at Coapa. As Pillow neared the hill of Zacatepec, he was in-

\* Official Reports.



formed of the result of the battle. His information was confirmed by his observation from the hill, and he at once sent it to Scott. The general-in-chief did not rely upon it implicitly, as it was necessarily imperfect in its details, and only the general result. No change was made in the order for the movement of one of Worth's brigades; and Garland had advanced near to the hill of Zacatepec before full information of the state of affairs was received, and Scott felt safe in countermanding his order. Worth then returned with Garland's brigade to Coapa, and Scott continued on in person to Padierna.

So soon as the victory had been completely won, General Smith made arrangements for securing the prisoners and property, and for a vigorous pursuit; but, before it had been well commenced, Twiggs arrived from the hill of Zacatepec, and assumed command. He moved off with Smith's brigade, and, joining Shields's troops en route, continued on toward San Angel. Pillow came up soon after, and, having ordered forward the troops of his own division, passed to the front and assumed the command.

Santa Anna broke up from San Angel so soon as Valencia's defeat had been consummated, and retreated at once to his works at Churubusco. The American advance became slightly engaged with his rear guard as it left the town; but the retreat was precipitate, and the skirmish of but little positive effect. Pillow halted at San Angel to await

orders; for, knowing that Scott's object was to open the road to Tacubaya and Chapultepec, he had sent a request to the general-in-chief to be allowed to move with his own and Twiggs's division, and Shields's brigade, through San Angel to the flank and rear of San Antonio. It was suggested that Worth should at the same time operate against San Antonio with the troops then in position at Coapa.\* The general-in-chief received the request at the intrenched camp, while he was resolving in his mind the orders which he should send to Worth. After a short consideration of Pillow's suggestion, he directed the officer who had delivered it to order him to move on, but to move cautiously.†

Pillow accordingly ordered the advance from San Angel in the direction of Coyacan. Twiggs opposed a further movement on that day, as he said that the troops were too much exhausted for effective operations, and he refused to proceed without positive orders. But, in obedience to General Scott's directions, and in accordance with his original intentions, Pillow repeated his order positively, and the column moved on, with Smith's brigade in advance.

The rifle regiment covered the advance, which arrived at Coyacan without resistance, although parties of the enemy were in the village as it en-

\* Lieutenant S. B. Davis's Testimony before the Court of Inquiry. Executive Document, No. 65, Senate, first Session of the thirtieth Congress, p. 210.

† Idem ibidem.

tered it. A party of the rifles had been mounted on captured Mexican horses, and the young officers who commanded it pushed rapidly on in pursuit. A short skirmish ensued beyond the village, in which several prisoners and a few guidons were captured, and the party returned without having learned any thing definite of the positions of the enemy.

Upon nearing Coyacan Pillow had been overtaken by an officer of the staff of the general-in-chief, who bore an order for him to halt and await his arrival. He accordingly halted at Coyacan, and in a few minutes Scott and his staff rode in.

As he rode past the troops he was received with loud and continuous cheers, for the victory of the morning had raised the spirits of the army to the utmost. The reaction incident to the change from the dreary bivouac of the night of the 19th to the complete victory and bright sunshine of the morning of the 20th had been extreme. In the proud exultation of one victory, officers and men looked forward to a continuation of the struggle, in anticipation of a complete triumph, and that, before night, the object of the campaign would be obtained. Perhaps no body of soldiers, as a whole, was ever more eager for the fray, or more willing to enter at once into close combat, than was the American army on the morning of the eventful 20th of August. The feeling was doubtless shared by the general-in-chief, who, although burdened with many charges of a military and diplomatic nature,



could not have failed, in the general enthusiasm, to catch a portion of the spirit, and he appeared willing and anxious to pursue his victory.

San Antonio was still the point of attack, in order to open short communication with Worth and the depôt of the army at San Augustin. Of the positions of the enemy, save that solitary one, nothing was known, and only the general direction of the roads and the general topography was understood.

The first thing attempted was to inform Worth, in front of San Antonio, of the vicinity of the main army. For this end, engineer and staff officers, with the escort of a troop of cavalry and a battalion of rifles, were sent, with orders to open a fire which should give the information to Worth. Others ascended the steeple of a church to observe the country, and in a short time it was reported that the enemy had abandoned San Antonio, and was in full retreat along the causeway to the city. The report was soon after confirmed by the arrival of a staff officer from the party sent to communicate with Worth, and General Scott took immediate action.

Two roads lead from Coyacan toward the causeway of San Antonio; one nearly due east, and the other southeast, toward the fortified hacienda of the same name. Pillow was ordered to lead one brigade of his division by the eastern road, in order to get upon the causeway and cut off the retreat of the enemy. Twiggs, at the same time, was di-

rected to move one of his brigades to the southeast, and to fall on the enemy in flank. Worth, it was supposed, was, of course, driving him up from his former front.

The two generals at once commenced their movements, but Twiggs moved off with Smith's brigade, which was at the head of the column, on the road which Pillow had been directed to take. Scott, having been informed of this mistake, quickly directed Pillow to move on the route indicated for Twiggs, and to be guided by his instructions. Pillow placed himself at the head of Cadwalader's brigade, and took the route to San Antonio.

Captain Kearney, of the first dragoons, who commanded General Scott's personal escort, being anxious to participate in the action, asked for and obtained permission to follow him.

The orders and movements above narrated were those which proceeded from the head-quarters of the American army at Coyacan previous to the battle of Churubusco. But the position of affairs was not understood, and many things interfered to prevent the complete execution of them. Indeed, nothing proved to be as had been anticipated, except the indomitable valor of the American soldiers, and long experience had shown that that was equal to almost any emergency.

## CHAPTER VIII.

General Worth's Operations against San Antonio—BATTLE OF CHURUBUSCO—  
State of Affairs immediately succeeding it in the City of Mexico—Posi-  
tions of the American Army—Quitman's Position at San Augustin.

WHEN General Worth returned with Garland's brigade from the route toward Padierna, he directed his attention to operations against the position of San Antonio. His reconnaissances had been pushed with a view of proving the practicability of turning it by his left, through the Pedregal, during the continuance of the operations of the 19th. Being relieved from apprehension of interruption by the fall of Valencia's intrenched camp, with discretionary orders from the general-in-chief, and emulous of sharing in the success of the other portions of the army, he at once commenced preparations for the advance.

He continued his reconnaissances for a time, and being fully convinced that the route was practicable for infantry, at eleven o'clock A.M. he ordered Clarke's brigade and Lieutenant-colonel C. F. Smith's light battalion to turn the enemy's right by the Pedregal, and to cut his line of retreat to the city. At the same time he advanced Garland's brigade and Lieutenant-colonel Duncan's light battery to within observing distance of the enemy, to be in readiness to fall on in front so soon as Clarke should become engaged in rear.



Clarke's troops, guided by Captain Mason, of the engineers, and other staff officers, progressed in the movement. It was necessarily slow, from the exceeding difficulty of the Pedregal, if any thing, more savagely rough at this the eastern than at the western extremity. During the movement Worth sent the fourth regiment of infantry into the rocks, guided by his assistant adjutant general, Mackall, with orders to support the turning column if necessary, or, if possible, to make a separate attack and carry one of the batteries.\*

Before Clarke could arrive at a position in rear of the enemy, General Bravo, who commanded at the hacienda, broke up and commenced his retreat, for he had been made acquainted with Valencia's defeat at Padierna, and with the movements of the main American army on the left flank. Santa Anna had ordered him to fall back,† and the threatening nature of Worth's operations in front tended to hasten his movements.

When Clarke's advance came out of the Pedregal in sight of the main road, Bravo's main force was already in retreat. He had carried off several guns, and sent his stores of ammunition to the rear. The center of his column of infantry was opposite the head of Clarke's as the latter came into the cultivated ground north of the Pedregal, at a point some three hundred yards west of the causeway.

\* General Worth's Report. Executive Document, No. 1, House of Representatives, first Session of the thirtieth Congress, p. 316

† Santa Anna's Report, published in the *Diario del Gobierno*.

Clarke's troops, in considerable disarray, were not immediately ready for action; but two companies of the fifth infantry, under the immediate guidance of the engineer officer, being in the advance, moved at once down upon the enemy's flank and opened fire. Other portions of the command entered into the action as they could form and come up; and, finally, the party, being in force, pushed on to the causeway, cutting the Mexican column in two.

Its advance, consisting principally of the national guards of the city of Mexico, retreated rapidly along the road. General Bravo, with the rear, which kept up a scattering fire for a short time, and lost several officers and men in killed, wounded, and prisoners, General Perdigon Garay being among the latter, crossed the ditches and marshy ground east of the causeway, and took the direction of Mexicalcingo, for at this time Worth was rapidly coming through the abandoned works with Garland's brigade.

He had heard the commencement of Clarke's fire, and at once ordered Garland to move forward a company of infantry to draw the fire of the Mexican guns, and to follow quickly with his two regiments to the assault. But, as Bravo had abandoned his position, the advance was uninterrupted, and Garland could only fall on the Mexican rear, after having secured the few pieces of artillery left in the works.

As Bravo made a precipitate retreat through difficult and marshy ground, Worth determined to





# BATTLE OF CHURUBUSCO.

August 20<sup>th</sup> 1847.



neglect the fugitives in that direction and to push on by the causeway. Duncan's guns were ordered forward, and Garland's brigade was united with the eighth infantry of Clarke's near the point where the latter had struck the causeway. But the sixth and fifth regiments had pushed on along the road in pursuit of the retreating enemy, the sixth being in advance, as it had formed on the left of the fifth when the latter had engaged the Mexican flank. Worth moved on with the greater portion of his troops, and overtook the fifth before it came under fire; but the sixth, having passed rapidly forward beyond supporting distance, had become warmly engaged, and the battle of Churubusco had commenced.

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The position occupied by Santa Anna's troops was the general line of the Rio de Churubusco, a stream which has been before mentioned. It runs almost due east from a point on the road from San Angel to the city of Mexico, to the Lake of Xochomilco. Its banks have been artificially elevated to prevent inundation, and its course made so nearly straight, that, except in depth and width, the river can hardly be distinguished from one of the large irrigating ditches of the country. Like those of all Mexican water-courses, its sides were planted with rows of maguey, affording a screen for a large number of troops, to which the elevated banks afforded partial protection. South of the stream some hund-



red yards lay the scattered houses of the village of Churubusco. One of the most westerly of these was a massive stone convent, which had been prepared for defense.

It was surrounded by a field-work, having embrasures and platforms for many cannon, and was the right point of the Mexican line. The northern and eastern fronts were unfinished, but the southern and western were very strong and substantially built. Seven guns completely swept and commanded, with a raking and cross fire, the road from Coyacan east to the causeway of San Antonio, which passed to the south of the position. The walls of the convent were creneled for musketry; the parapets of the azoteas and windows all afforded good positions for troops, and ammunition to any required amount was inside of the buildings. This point was held by General Rincon, with over 3000 men.

The next fortification, toward the Mexican left, was the tête du pont of Churubusco, covering the bridge by which the causeway of San Antonio led to the city. It was a beautiful field-work, solidly and scientifically constructed, with wet ditches, and embrasures and platforms for a large armament. But, at the time the action commenced, every thing was in confusion in and about the work. Indeed, no part of the Mexican force was ready for battle except Rincon's command.

The army which Santa Anna had led back from San Angel was forming along the River Churubus-



co and in the corn-fields to its north. Other large bodies of troops of the line and a few pieces of artillery were in march from the city, while the cavalry was moving along the road north of the tête du pont to a position in rear, to hold itself in reserve. Of the guns which Bravo had sent from San Antonio, three had arrived at the tête du pont. One thirty-two pounder broke down on the road, and was seized by the sixth infantry in its advance. The whole train of ammunition wagons, being exceedingly heavy and unwieldy, had stalled on coming to the entrance of the fortification, blocking up the road for a considerable distance in its front, and partially obstructing the fire from its embrasures.

But, although much confusion existed, yet the Mexican troops were formidable from their overwhelming numbers and the strength of their position; and they were by no means deficient in nerve, nor did they show any disinclination for the battle. Santa Anna, assisted by a crowd of general officers, strove to form his line, and with some success; but, while things were in this state, the small battalion of the sixth infantry came boldly forward, though irregularly and in confusion. The leading companies, being gallantly led, from very rashness would, in all probability, have entered the tête du pont, had not Rincon's troops opened a terrific fire of cannon and musketry from the convent.

The distance was great for musketry, being over three hundred and fifty yards; but the Mexican position was elevated, and, with the enormous car-

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tridge furnished to Mexican soldiers, the bullets were easily sent to the road ; without accurate aim, it is true, but in heavy rolling volleys, and with deadly force. In the tête du pont, a portion of the battalion of San Patricio, composed of deserters from the American army, was engaged in getting the three guns in that work into battery, while many Mexicans lined the parapet, and poured volleys of musketry down the road. The artillery soon opened, raking the causeway ; and, being without support or definite orders, the sixth staggered for a time, the rear became separated from the front, and the regiment was finally ordered, by its major, to break, fall back, and reform behind the houses of the village, which it had passed in its advance. With the exception of a party under Captain Walker, which had extended to the right, and remained in the vicinity of the enemy,\* the regiment obeyed the order ; but its advance had a most beneficial effect upon the after events of the action. It had forced the Mexican army to commence the battle in a measure unprepared, had prevented the securing the large ammunition train from San Antonio, and with these must be counted the moral effect of the rapid attack upon the Mexican main army immediately after the retreat from San Angel, and Bravo's rout from San Antonio.

But ignorance of the enemy's position, and the

\* Major Bonneville's and Captain Hoffman's Reports. Executive Document, No. 1, House of Representatives, first Session of the thirtieth Congress, Appendix to the Report of the Secretary of War, p. 62, 63.

want of free communications, brought portions of the American army into positions of extreme peril.

While this movement of the sixth infantry was in progress, Twiggs, ignorant of the locality, was marching direct upon the convent of Churubusco, in order to cut off the retreat of the Mexican garrison of San Antonio. Engineer and other staff officers were in advance, examining the route; but, before they had ascertained the nature of the Mexican defenses, the heavy fire of the convent opened upon the sixth infantry. Being entirely ignorant of Worth's operations, the staff officers did not conceive that the discharge was directed at his troops. They knew that the rifles had been detached somewhere in that direction on reconnaissance, and thought that corps had become closely engaged, and would require immediate and strong support. Advancing to ascertain the true state of affairs, they came upon the convent, and still believing that the rifles were engaged, a very hasty observation was taken, and reports sent to Twiggs of the necessity of engaging other troops.

The senior engineer officer present believed that he had discovered a position whence light field-guns could play upon the roofs and windows of the building, unexposed to any other fire than that of a single gun.\* Upon receiving the report, Twiggs, who was some distance in the rear at the time, at

\* General Smith's Report. Executive Document, No. 1, House of Representatives, first Session of the thirtieth Congress, p. 330, and Major Dimick's Report. *Idem*, Appendix to the Report of the Secretary of War, p. 78.



once ordered Captain Taylor's field battery forward to the position. Taylor's experience as an artilleryman led him to doubt its eligibility; but Twiggs's order was positive, and the guns were unlimbered within close range of the enemy. Hardly were they in battery before the fire from the convent was turned upon them in its greater strength, and cut up officers, men, and horses in the most destructive manner.

Smith's brigade had been ordered forward at about the same time, and the first regiment of artillery (acting as infantry) was sent to turn the supposed one gun battery by its left. Passing Taylor's guns, the regiment took position before the south front of the work. Although hidden, to a degree, by the dense growth of corn, which covered nearly the whole country about the Mexican position, it yet suffered severely, for the enemy, from his elevation on the convent, could overlook the field, and observe the presence of the American troops. Notwithstanding the overwhelming fire to which the regiment was exposed, the men held their ground, finding such shelter as the vicinity afforded, and returning the shot with all practicable effect.

General Smith brought up the third infantry to the support of the field battery; and that regiment, posting itself in and about some adobe houses in the vicinity, commenced such a fire as could be delivered against stone convents and fortifications with musketry. But, while this was going on, and

officers and men were vainly looking for a point to storm the position, the Mexican fire continued unabated and unabating. The convent was one sheet of flame and smoke; the Mexican guns were worked by a portion of the same battalion of San Patricio engaged at the tête du pont, and wherever the assailants were exposed their loss was excessive.

Soon after the action had become close, Twiggs ordered Riley to attack the enemy's right with his two remaining regiments, the second and seventh infantry. The veteran colonel at once moved forward in line in the direction indicated; but upon the western as well as upon the southern front, the approaches were masked by a dense growth of corn, and the enemy poured his fire incessantly. Riley ordered the seventh infantry to form as a support for the second, and in person, with his staff, he searched for practicable points upon which to advance; but men and officers fell thick and fast, and the troops, hidden from the enemy and each other, became somewhat disordered; still, none thought of any thing but to advance, and for that many attempts were made in all the corps engaged.

A portion of the first artillery gained positions within some seventy yards of the convent, which it held throughout the action. The third infantry kept up its fire. Taylor's men and horses were continually falling; yet, fearful of compromising the safety of other troops, he kept up the unequal cannonade, and his guns were worked with surprising rapidity. Parties of the second, striving to advance,

were cut up severely. The head of one company, with its commander, was shot down at one discharge. One captain, struggling forward under the severest fire, was twice severely wounded, and every man with him was struck at the same time.

The Mexicans, with loud shouts, moved out in a sally at the point; but the other portions of the American line closed in, and delivered so well-directed a fire that the attempt was repulsed.\* But still the efforts of the Americans to advance were vain, and the battle around the convent raged with fury. Meanwhile the Mexicans had become engaged with Worth's and Pillow's troops around the tête du pont, and with Smith's and Pierce's in the rear, and the action was general.

When the fierce contest in which the corps which had advanced from Coyacan had engaged had developed the general position of the Mexican line and the nature of the resistance to be overcome, General Scott ordered General Pierce to move, with two regiments and the battery of mountain howitzers, by a by-road north from the village of Coyacan, and, having gained sufficient ground, to turn to the right, and fall upon the Mexican rear.† Pierce marched with the twelfth and fifteenth and the battery. Soon after, Shields was ordered to move in the same direction, with his two regiments

\* Colonel Riley's Report. Executive Document, No. 1, House of Representatives, first Session of the thirtieth Congress, Appendix to the Report of the Secretary of War, p. 86.

† General Scott's Report. Executive Document, No. 1, House of Representatives, first Session of the thirtieth Congress, p. 309.



and the ninth infantry, which had come up from San Angel to rejoin its brigade.

These corps crossed the River Churubusco at a point nearly north of Coyacan, and, in obedience to General Scott's orders, moved down upon the causeway of San Antonio, the point of direction being to the rear and north of the tête du pont; but upon the causeway was posted the strong Mexican reserve which had that morning marched from the city.

Observing the approach of the American troops, the Mexican general at once formed his line along the causeway, facing the west, and against the growth of trees and maguey with which the road was lined. His cavalry was sent across the ditches along the road, to gain a position on the left flank and rear of the assailants, who by this movement were threatened with the same danger which it had been intended should have menaced the Mexicans.

The Americans advanced as rapidly as the nature of the ground would permit, although necessarily in some disarray. The twelfth and fifteenth, being in front, and at first unsupported, occupied a stone inclosure surrounding a threshing-floor, which afforded partial protection to some companies; but, while the fifteenth was deploying, the Mexican fire opened throughout the whole extent of the line along the road in heavy rolling volleys. The colonel of the fifteenth was wounded, and both regiments were severely cut up.

The fire was returned with spirit and vigor by the infantry as well as by the battery of mountain howitzers. The American reply was, nevertheless, entirely inefficient, for the Mexicans advanced into the ditch along the causeway, obtaining partial protection, besides being hid from their opponents by the dense growth of maguey.

Shields's brigade and the ninth infantry soon came up, but they suffered severely from the fire in the front, and also from the left flank, for the Mexican cavalry had reached its position, and large numbers, having dismounted, advanced on foot and commenced a rapid discharge of their escopetas.

The effect of the sudden encounter of the overwhelming force by Pierce's and Shields's troops was to throw the latter for a time into confusion. The Mexicans outnumbered them at least five to one, and, at the same time, were partially hidden and protected. With the exception of the few companies of the twelfth and fifteenth, protected by the stone inclosure, the Americans were perfectly exposed and in fair open view. Severely cut up, different regiments broke several times, and the men clustered thick behind a barn in the vicinity for shelter; but the barn afforded no protection from the flank fire. The line was several times reformed, only, however, to be again broken. Parties from the angles of the building kept up a discharge against the enemy, and the twelfth and fifteenth still held on to their position, with the assistance of the mountain howitzers, which were kept in lively

play. But the Mexican fire continued, and the attitude of the cavalry on the left became more threatening every instant.

Under the dangerous aspect of affairs, strenuous exertions were made to restore the formation and make good the battle. Shields and his staff, Pierce's staff (for that general, suffering from the injury of his fall on the previous day, was unable to give his personal attention)—in fact, the great portion of the officers, did all which it was possible to do, and finally order was restored.

The ninth infantry was led against the cavalry on the left, and soon opened a close and well-directed fire. The New York and South Carolina regiments advanced in line against the enemy along the road. The Mexicans sustained the battle with murderous discharges, killing the colonel and mortally wounding the lieutenant colonel of the South Carolina troops, wounding the colonel of the New York regiment, and, besides, numerous other brave and gallant men of inferior rank fell dead or wounded. The advance was checked for a while, but those unhurt struggled on, and, finally, the Mexican line wavered, broke, and fled, a disordered multitude, down the road to the city; for Worth and Pillow's troops had by this time forced the tête du pont, and detachments were coming over the bridge and down the road in hot pursuit upon the flank of the line which had been opposed to Pierce and Shields.

While Pillow was marching from Coyacan upon



the hacienda of San Antonio, in obedience to his original orders from General Scott, the fire commenced from the convent of Churubusco upon the sixth infantry, and soon after upon Twiggs's troops. The march was at once hastened in the direction of the causeway, for the noise of the conflict about the convent showed at once that the main Mexican force was on the left, and that the battle was to be fought there instead of at the hacienda, upon which it had originally been directed.

Upon coming in sight of the causeway, a party of troops was observed moving south, through the village of Churubusco. It was at first mistaken for a Mexican corps; but the colors of the sixth infantry were soon observed, and, seeing that strong resistance had been encountered in that direction, Pillow inclined strongly to his left, increased the pace of the column, and moved at a double quick upon the village. The fields which were traversed were deep and miry, and several deep ditches, bordered with maguey, intervened before the causeway could be reached. The general, staff, and other mounted officers dismounted, and led the men on foot, getting rapidly over the deep ground and the ditches until the road was neared. Along the causeway the irrigating canal was too wide and too deep to admit of an immediate passage, and the troops were delayed for a short while in filling it up. In this work parties of the sixth joined, and in a few minutes Cadwalader's brigade was upon the causeway, effecting a junction with

the main body of Worth's division, which, in full good humor for battle, just then came forward.

The battle was then raging fiercely about the convent, and Worth and Pillow determined to fall on and carry the Mexican positions immediately in their front. Nothing could be seen of them except the line of smoke above the vegetation, although it was easily perceived, from the character of the Mexican fire and the bold resistance, that they were strong in the extreme. The state of affairs did not admit of delay for reconnaissance, even had reconnaissance been practicable, when so fierce a struggle was raging upon the left at the convent.

Worth at once ordered Garland to form his brigade on the right of the causeway, and move forward in line to the assault. Garland moved into the fields immediately with the second and third regiments of artillery (both acting as infantry), and advanced. Lieutenant-colonel Smith's light battalion was ordered to take post on his right, and as the fourth regiment of infantry, which had been detached at San Antonio, came up just then, it was ordered to rejoin its brigade.

Meanwhile Captain Mason, of the engineers, had been making what reconnaissance it was practicable to make in the extreme hurry of events, and noticing that the convent and the tête du pont were the strongest points of the Mexican line, conceived that it was practicable to penetrate between the two, and isolate the convent. He reported his views

through Captain Hooker, assistant adjutant general, to Pillow, and that general ordered the eleventh regiment, under Lieutenant-colonel Graham, up the road in the direction of the tête du pont, until, under Mason's guidance, it crossed the ditch on the left, and took post in the corn-fields in front of the Mexican line between the two works. The fourteenth, Colonel Trousdale's regiment, soon followed in support, and crossed at the same point. The movement was observed by the enemy, and the troops were soon subjected to a severe cross fire, under which they were ordered to lie down while the officers advanced to reconnoiter.

While these events were taking place, a battalion of the sixth infantry had reformed, and soon after was ordered to assault the tête du pont directly along the road. Captain Hoffman led it forward with gallant bravery, and officers and men followed nobly. But the Mexicans in the work, whose attention had been given to the troops advancing through the corn on either flank, seeing this direct assault, turned all their guns upon it, which, enfilading the road, made dreadful havoc. Some of the men recoiled under the stern stroke of the artillery; but the general officers were by their side, and a few words of reproof and encouragement sent them back to their places. With a shout they again followed their officers in the advance; but the direct assault was impracticable, and Worth shouted to Hoffman to incline to the right into the corn, to operate with the main body



of the division in that quarter. There, next the causeway, the fifth and eighth had become engaged. They had advanced on the right of the road, and had been saved much of the loss which had befallen the sixth.

The general disposition of the contending troops about the tête du pont was that of one line against the other. The infantry of Worth's division was in front of the Mexican line, east of the causeway, along the river, while Pillow's two regiments were opposed to the line between the convent and bridge head. The voltigeurs, the remaining regiment of Cadwalader's brigade, was in reserve in the village of Churubusco; so, also, was Duncan's battery; for, although Duncan had sought for a position whence he could bring his guns effectively into action, none could be found which afforded any thing like an equality with the enemy, and at the same time precluded danger from his fire to the troops of his own party.

The only cavalry in the vicinity was Captain Kearney's command, which had accompanied Pillow from Coyacan. With much trouble Kearney had succeeded in getting his horses across the difficult ground and ditches to the causeway. There he was joined by a troop of the third dragoons. While the action continued, an attempt was made to turn the enemy's left with this small corps, and to assail his left flank; but the deep ditches by which the fields were traversed prevented the movement, and the dragoons returned to the causeway.

After the first disposition of the troops, the battle continued to rage without any general evolution being undertaken. Indeed, such an evolution was perfectly impracticable, from the nature of the ground occupied by the Americans here as well as about the convent, so densely covered with the growth of corn that the corps could hardly see and communicate with each other. This circumstance partially screened the Americans from the Mexican view; but the Mexican officers knew the position perfectly, while it was as perfectly unknown to the Americans. Therefore the Mexicans, from their line about the banks of the rivulet, could deliver their heavy, rolling volleys in the direction where they knew their enemy was advancing, while the Americans were deterred from using their muskets by want of view and the fear of injuring their own people.

The advance was, however, steadily continued. Fearful of running upon the stronger points of the enemy's line, the American officers halted their commands, while small parties advanced to reconnoiter. So soon as the ground in front of any corps was in this manner found to be practicable, the corps moved forward until another halt became necessary.

But the Mexican fire was continued and heavy. Officers and men fell here, too, thick and fast, and the tedious manner in which it was necessary to progress tried severely the patience of the troops. Those who could obtain position and sight kept up a fire, but the number was comparatively small.

Meanwhile the roar of Mexican musketry was the greatest noise of all the din of battle ; it was continued and terrific, drowning the noise of the artillery, the shouts of the combatants, and the groans of the wounded. From the road in rear of the tête du pont, where the Mexican reserve was engaged with Shields and Pierce, from the convent, and from the tête du pont and the line of the rivulet, more than twenty thousand muskets were continually discharged with a rapidity which showed the stern determination of the enemy. Heavy clouds of smoke rose over the whole Mexican positions, while, except around the convent, the American were comparatively clear.

But as the American troops pressed closer and closer upon the enemy's left, his fire in that quarter began visibly to slacken, although it was continued with all its first rapidity and vigor along the other portions of the line. The convent and bridge head were particularly spiteful ; and the quick flashes and heavy clouds of smoke, and the numbers of the assailants who fell before each discharge, proved that they were stoutly defended. In the midst of the conflict, the explosion of an ammunition chest threw the garrison of the tête du pont momentarily into confusion ; but the point where the accident had told was soon reoccupied, and the volleys of musketry and the discharges of cannon were delivered with the same rapidity as before.

The battle had raged for more than two hours



from the time it was first opened by the sixth infantry, when the Mexicans first gave way in front of the American right, and fled through the corn-fields in their rear toward the city. A party of American troops of different regiments, principally of the second artillery and sixth infantry, was led on by its officers\* past the left of the tête du pont, crossed the River Churubusco, and presented itself in threatening position in rear of the work. At the same time the troops of Worth's division nearest it, which had been approaching throughout the battle, came out of the corn-fields upon the short open space immediately in its front. They were, in greater part, of the fifth and eighth regiments of infantry, under Lieutenant-colonel Martin Scott and Major Waite. Being joined by the eleventh and fourteenth, which corps, unable to penetrate between the tête du pont and convent, had crossed the road within close distance of the former work, the advance at once took place. The troops on the right closed in, and, rushing through the wet ditches, waist deep, over the parapets and into the work, the American troops carried it in a crowd. The Mexican position being turned, the left flank of the line having given way, and with determined foes just in the assault (and none can feel the determined energy of troops of Anglo-Saxon blood,

\* Captains Hoffman and Walker, and Lieutenant Armistead, of the sixth infantry, and Captain Brooks, and Lieutenants Daniels and Sedgwick, of the second artillery. See Captain Hoffman's Report. Executive Document, No. 1, House of Representatives, first Session of the thirtieth Congress, Appendix to the Report of the Secretary of War, p. 63.

when, after hours of suffering, they are led to the charge, unless they have been witnesses), the garrison of the tête du pont made but short resistance. A few shots were delivered, a few bayonets crossed, and the greater number fled over the bridge toward the city, leaving three guns, two standards, and twenty-seven officers and privates in the hands of the conquerors, whose loud and continued shouts succeeded the roar of hostile musketry and cannon which but a moment before had been delivered from the parapet.

The fall of the tête du pont insured the rout of the troops engaged with Shields's and Pierce's troops. The fugitives of the garrison, as well as of the Mexican main line, were forced back upon the flank of the reserves, throwing them into confusion. Within a few minutes after the first entrance of the work, parties of American infantry passed the bridge, and joined the party which had turned the work and moved down upon the road. This force marched on in pursuit. One of the guns captured was a piece of light artillery, with its horses and gearing complete. It was promptly seized by Captain Ayres, of the third artillery, who detailed a party of gunners, and advanced within range of the flank of the Mexican reserve. Being crowded by the fugitives, and assailed in this manner in flank and in front by the troops of Shields's and Pierce's commands, it could not stand, and, as has been seen, at once gave way in flight.

Shields brought his volunteers to the causeway,

II.—S

and they were soon followed by the troops of Pierce's brigade. The lancers opposed to the ninth infantry likewise fled so soon as the body of the Mexican force broke, and that regiment marched toward the causeway, having for its point of direction the hacienda of Los Portales, distant about a mile and a half from Churubusco.

Santa Anna, who was at the time with the retreating troops, ordered a corps to take possession of the buildings, to oppose the pursuit, and to cover the retreat. The resistance demonstrated, though noisy while it lasted, was not very long or efficient. The Mexicans of the party soon left the position and continued the flight with the great body of the fugitives.

While portions of Worth's and Pillow's commands were engaged in the pursuit and the demonstration on the flank of the Mexican reserve, others were employed against the convent, which still held out in spite of the vigorous assault of Twiggs's division.

One of the captured guns of the tête du pont was served upon it by a party of the eighth infantry. Duncan and several staff officers had been for a short while in observation from the steeple of a small church in Churubusco, and had observed a position where his guns could be placed in battery to enfilade the southern front of the field-work surrounding the convent. This was on the causeway in front of the tête du pont, and that work having been captured and the position relieved from its



fire, two pieces were at once located there in battery and opened.

General Pillow ordered the voltigeur regiment to move to a position whence it could advance against the northern point of the convent, and participate in the work. Cadwalader placed himself at the head of the regiment, and the movement was commenced ; but, before it got into action, the enemy hung out a white flag in token of surrender.

General Rincon had held on to his position with determined pertinacity ; but many officers and men of his command, having seen the fall of the tête du pont and the flight of the main Mexican army, endeavored to escape and to avoid the fate which evidently awaited the isolated position. Of those who fled, a portion fell in with and was captured by the troops of Shields's and Pierce's brigades. Another, trying to escape by passing near to the tête du pont, was severely cut up by the fire of the American troops from that work, and the survivors taken prisoners. But few reached the city, and those parties fortunate enough to do so left many killed and wounded along their routes.

With the exception of Taylor's battery, which, severely cut up, had been withdrawn at the close of the action, Twiggs's troops had held on to their positions around the convent. When the enemy had been beaten from the other points of the field, they pressed forward to a closer proximity of the work. General Smith ordered a charge, and the third regiment of infantry and the first artillery

mounted the parapet just as the white flag was displayed. Riley's troops came up, and Twiggs's division occupied the convent. Generals Rincon, Anaya, and Arellana, with the officers and soldiers of the garrison who had not attempted their escape, in all numbering over 1200 men, surrendered as prisoners of war. Seven guns and several standards were captured, and with them the convent, the last position of the Mexican army on the field of Churubusco, was won.

During the action the general-in-chief had remained at and near Coyacan, giving what superintendence the nature of the country, of the operations, and of his information enabled him to give to the progress of the battle. With Twiggs he was in easy communication; but Worth and Pillow were separated from him by a difficult piece of ground, and those generals conducted their operations under no other orders from head-quarters than those given to Worth on the route from Padierna, and that to Pillow at Coyacan, to assault San Antonio in flank.

Pierce's and Shields's movements to the rear having been ordered and made, a report of the critical situation of their corps just previous to the fall of the tête du pont and the last charge was brought to the general-in-chief. He at once sent the rifle regiment and a platoon of horse, the only troops at his disposal, to the support of the left; but, before those troops arrived within supporting distance, the enemy was in retreat.

Soon after they had marched from Coyacan, information was received of the fall of the tête du pont, and Scott sent immediate orders to Worth and Pillow not to pursue the enemy unless they were assured of some highly important advantage. As this order was sent soon after a staff officer came up from the left with an additional report of the critical state of affairs in that quarter, the discretion allowed to Pillow and Worth must have been intended to permit them to operate in favor of Shields. General Scott considered that something was necessary to enable the troops engaged with the Mexican reserve to make good the battle, for he told the staff officers to give encouragement to the brave men there engaged, and to say that he would proceed in person to that scene of combat. Soon after, the fall of the convent was announced, and as that conquest necessarily finished the battle, orders were sent to the different generals to halt their troops and to give up the pursuit.

These orders were received by them in time to arrest the march of the infantry of the army at the hacienda of Portales. To that point the main body of the troops of Worth's and Pillow's commands had advanced, effecting a junction with Shields's troops, and the whole force was marching upon the city; but the order was not received in time to check the advance of the cavalry, and that small body had nearly reached the garita of the capital.

So soon as the tête du pont had been carried, and Duncan's guns placed in battery against the



convent, Pillow had ordered Captain Kearney forward for the pursuit. The road from the village of Churubusco to the captured work was much obstructed by the killed and wounded, and the Mexican ammunition train. The huge wagons of which it was composed took up much space, and, in addition, every draught animal attached to them had been killed by the Mexican fire from the tête du pont and convent.

The confusion caused by the mass of dead men and animals, wagons and material, thrown together upon the road, was increased by the taking fire of one of the wagons, threatening instant and destructive explosions. In consequence, some delay arose in bringing the dragoons forward past the obstacles to the captured work. Some of the soldiers on the road, however, with most reckless daring, mounted the wagons, and actually threw the burning ammunition chests into the ditch.

In the mean time the retreating Mexicans had gained much distance in their flight. Upon his arrival at the tête du pont, Kearney formed his three troops and moved rapidly forward. In the route they were joined by Colonel Harney and a platoon under Captain Ker. Kearney increased his pace to a gallop, and the corps, small as it was, tore along the causeway after the enemy. The mass was overtaken about half a mile from the garita of San Antonio Abad, by which the causeway enters the city. The dragoons rode at speed into the crowd, which was cut down, ridden over,

or dispersed through the ditches into the fields on either side, while that portion still in front crowded in a confused mass into the entrance of the garita. The point was defended by a battery mounting two guns, and the small garrison, in a panic at the wild charge of the Americans, opened fire on friend and foe, causing serious loss, and injuring both. Nevertheless, the advance continued; and, seeing that the Mexican officers dismounted to pass the ditch, which was cut nearly across the road, Kearney jumped from his horse, called on his dragoons to follow, and rushed forward to enter the battery with the fugitives. He was unsupported except by two or three officers and about a dozen privates, for General Scott's order had reached Colonel Harney, who had caused the recall to be sounded from the rear. The notes of the bugle were unheard in the uproar of the fight, or, if heard, were for a time unheeded by those in the front, and the halt took place first in the rear. Small parties continually dropped off as they heard of the order, until only three or four sets of fours were left engaged with the enemy.

Finding themselves unsupported, and the Mexicans, seeing the weakness of the assailants, having partially recovered from the panic and resumed an attitude of resistance, the Americans fell back; not, however, until they had sustained the loss of one officer (Major Mills, of the fifteenth infantry, who had joined the charge as a volunteer) killed, three others severely wounded, besides several privates

killed, wounded, and captured. So soon as the remainder of the party had extricated itself, the dragoons fell back to the position of the advanced divisions of the army, and the battle of Churubusco was ended.

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A battle in which the stern, determined bravery of the American troops, and the general skill of the officers in any emergency, was most conspicuously displayed. Although most of the corps entered the action without any knowledge of the enemy's position, yet each and all had held on and continued the battle until the enemy, broken and beaten, notwithstanding his overwhelming numbers and strong positions, had fled before the assault. But, brilliant as the victory was, it had cost the American army dear. One thousand of its bravest spirits had fallen—killed and disabled;\* and as of the number seventy-six were officers, it is easy to see under what gallant leading the victory was achieved.

Indeed, the impetuous bravery, and the cool and skillful conduct of the officers of the American army, shown to advantage throughout the Mexican war, was never more fully demonstrated; for it is not so much in the regular advance, against positions well known and carefully reconnoitered, that the genius and bravery of the subordinate of-

\* Return of killed and wounded. Executive Document, No. 1, House of Representatives, first Session of the thirtieth Congress, p. 431.



ficers is most conspicuous or necessary, as there the soldier is acquainted with his work, and advances with as much zeal and bravery as his superiors. But upon sudden emergencies, in difficult positions, when the leading and execution must be accomplished, if accomplished at all, upon the moment, such as often had taken place in the various events of the battle of Churubusco, then it devolves upon the officer, of whatever rank he may be, to seize the advantages which may offer in time. His example of brave devotion must animate his soldiers to the achievement of deeds of daring, and contribute to the victory which will give his country the object of the strife, or, at least, the glory and honor awarded to all nations possessed of brave and gallant defenders. And, truly, at Churubusco, the American officers were not wanting in the most honorable attributes of their profession, nor did the soldiers fail in aught required of them.

And it can not be said, in truth, that there the Mexicans individually did not fight like true men. The length of the conflict, the loss of the assailants, and the carnage among their own ranks, prove conclusively the nature of the struggle; and though, notwithstanding overwhelming numbers, strong positions, and every advantage, they were beaten, the cause must be looked for in other than the want of nerve, so far as the Mexican soldiers are concerned.

Yet the character of their resistance only increases the glory and merit of the conquerors in warlike achievement. And who shall do justice

to those brave spirits who died either in the lead or in the ranks? Who shall tell the glory to be awarded to those who fell in the brave and devoted discharge of duty? The living have received and will receive such reward as on earth is given in the approbation of their countrymen; but the dead have passed away, and the only reward is that which can be given to their memories.

Of the seventy-six officers who fell, Captains Capron and Burke, Lieutenants Irons and Hoffman, of the first artillery; Captain Anderson and Lieutenant Easley, of the second infantry; Lieutenant Bacon, of the sixth; Major Mills and Captain Quarles, of the fifteenth; Colonel Butler, Lieutenant-colonel Dickenson, and Lieutenants Adams and Williams, of the South Carolina regiment, and Lieutenant Chandler, of the New York Volunteers, all were either slain upon the field or soon died from their wounds. Of the remainder, belonging to the different regiments engaged, many never permanently recovered. To the memory of the dead, the different commanders have endeavored to do justice, and the official records of their country's glory tell where and how they died in sustaining it.

The Mexican loss in the strife was most severe, but it is hardly possible to arrive at its exact amount. The complete rout which the army suffered, the temporary disorganization of many corps, and the general panic which pervaded the city for many days, prevented its being immediately or ac-

curately ascertained. But from the number of dead and wounded along the roads, in the fields, and about the different positions, together with the dispersion of different bodies of troops, it could not have fallen short of 7000 men in killed, wounded, and missing in the battle of Churubusco.

The effect of the operations and battles of the 19th and 20th of August was to beat the Mexican army completely, and to place the capital for a time at the mercy of the conquerors; for it can not be doubted that the two-gun battery at the garita of San Antonio Abad would have been carried at once, had it suited the views or arrangements of the American general-in-chief to continue the movements in pursuit. The state of things in the city was such as to preclude the possibility of organized resistance by either the beaten army or the populace. The panic was extreme. Most of the inhabitants, trusting to the display of troops and warlike preparation, had remained in the city. When the first tidings were received from the camp of Valencia, they had indulged in anticipations of a glorious success. Such had been the hope upon the morning of the 20th; but in the afternoon, the conclusion of the battle of Churubusco, the arrival of the beaten battalions, of the trains of wounded soldiers, and of the Mexican president, told a different tale, and all were in fear of the immediate entrance of the victorious army. Men, women, and children were in the greatest alarm, which false rumors, created in fancy, and kept up by the



shouts of the crowd, "Aqui viene los Yanquies," in different parts of the city, sustained throughout the night.\*

While the battle had continued to rage, Santa Anna had ordered forward the troops left in garrison at El Peñon, and these entered the city during the afternoon. Some of the beaten battalions were reorganized, and strong corps of troops were posted about the garitas of La Candelaria, San Antonio, and El Niño Perdido, apparently in readiness to contest the last point between the enemy and the capital. The disposition was not effected until night had come on, and then was unnecessary, for the American army had halted and taken up quarters near the field of battle.

Worth's division and Shields's brigade remained for the night about the hacienda of Portalis and the village of Churubusco. Twiggs's was quartered at Coyacan and San Angel. Pillow's fell back to San Antonio. General Scott returned to his head-quarters at San Augustin, and no preparations were made for renewing the advance and entering the city on the following morning.

During the operations of the 19th and 20th, General Quitman had been kept at San Augustin in charge of the depôt. Several alertes were occasioned by the vicinity of Alvarez's corps, which had followed the American army around Lake Chalco. Alvarez did not deem it prudent to as-

\* Intercepted Mexican letters. See Executive Document, No. 65, Senate, first Session of the thirtieth Congress, p. 419-454.

sault Quitman's position ; and although he was literally, in the execution of his orders, to occupy and cut the American line of retreat, yet he confined his operations to simple occupation. Quitman several times sent parties of cavalry against his pickets, and the Pintos were as often driven, with the loss of several men and horses. By night they had retired, and left San Augustin perfectly quiet.

At the close of the eventful 20th of August the American army was in these different positions, and hardly had the troops, unhurt and wounded, been placed under shelter, when a cold, heavy rain, like that of the night of the 19th, set in, and darkness and silence succeeded the bright sunlight and din of arms which, throughout the day, had reigned in the valley of Mexico.

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## CHAPTER IX.

*Observations*—March around Lake Chalco—Reconnaissances upon San Antonio and Padierna—Construction of the Road—Commencement of Battle of Contreras—General Cadwalader's and Colonel Riley's Operations—Generals Twiggs's and Smith's Operations—March by San Angel on San Antonio—Worth's Operations against San Antonio—BATTLE OF CHURUBUSCO—Mexican Operations.

IN making observations upon the operations of the American army in the valley of Mexico, brilliant and successful as they were, it is impossible to refer to any examples of either ancient or mod-

ern history, or to be guided entirely by the known and established rule of military action ; for it would be difficult to find in all the records of war an example like this, where 10,500 troops had advanced upon a city of over 180,000 inhabitants, defended by more than three times its own numbers, in positions strong by nature, and rendered still stronger by art, and where the party attacked was upon any thing like an equality with the assailants in military organization, preparation, or armament. Indeed, the only event which can be found analogous to the advance of the American army in Mexico is the advance and conquest of Cortes over the same ground hundreds of years before. The differences of preparation and position, and the causes, both moral and physical, of his success and Aztec defeat, were so marked, that any action of his could, of necessity, form no rule of guidance for the American commander. The advance of the American army must stand in history, for a time at least, alone. Its operations must also stand, in the judgment of the world, wherever they are novel, upon their own merits, and upon the reasons for which they were at the time undertaken.

As frequently happens after the achievement of any great military exploit, many controversies have arisen concerning the movements and operations of different corps and their commanders. Such controversies will probably ever continue to occur, so long as the history of the world is the history of its warriors. In this case, however, the differ-



ent matters were, to some extent, brought before a court of inquiry, and the principal facts of the case were developed by sworn testimony. That the subject is mentioned here and in this connection may be considered out of place, inasmuch as the controversies occurred at a period later by some months than the events which have been narrated; but as before the court by which the controversies were tried was delivered much of the testimony upon which the narrative is based, I have felt called upon to notice it here. One of the principal of these was concerning the battle of Contreras, and, in consequence, it has been endeavored to make the narrative of the orders and movements of that field clear and distinct. Of the important ones it rests entirely upon sworn testimony, which has been so ample as to leave no room for doubt.

The first great cause of American success in these operations, as can readily be seen, was in the bravery and courage of the army. Various adventitious and extraneous circumstances combined assisted it, more than did any general disposition of the troops for the hostile operations; for the operations were hardly any of them undertaken or carried out fully in accordance with the orders issuing from the head-quarters of the army. They were, in the action of the different corps, in a manner isolated and partial, and wherever combination existed, it happened as much by chance and the movements of subordinate commanders as by the will and order of the commander-in-chief. Of these

different movements and operations I shall remark in order :

1st. *Of the execution of the flank march south of Lake Chalco to the southern and western fronts of the city.*

The reasons for making this movement have been noticed in a former chapter. The movement itself may be criticised. The reconnaissance made on the 14th of August was not complete ; and although the information gained by Colonel Duncan was of such a character as to show that the remaining ten miles of the road was practicable, yet its precise features were unknown to great extent.

“War is not a conjectural art,”\* and the maxim will hold good in isolated operations as well as in those of more general character. Wherever the exception is made, and uncertainty exists about the ground over which movements are to be conducted, good policy would seem to dictate that the movement should be rapid, that the uncertainty may be cleared away as soon as possible.

Moreover, it is a settled principle in tactics, that “the train of an army should never be entangled in a defile of the further extremity of which that army has not possession.”† For several miles between the villages of Tuliahualco and San Augustin this route was a defile, and as each division was accompanied by its train, the army, train and all, was entangled in it. Had an action taken place while the troops were passing it, there were

\* Napoleon.

† Idem.

few places where the troops of one division could readily have passed the train of that in advance, and then must have left its own train under feeble escort. On account of these encumbrances to the advance, General Scott was two days and more in making twenty-five miles.

Had the two leading divisions (Worth's and Pillow's) been united with the cavalry, and moved at once from Chalco without their heavy baggage trains, which could have come forward with Quitman and Twiggs, the distance could have been accomplished in twelve hours; San Augustin could have been seized and occupied in force; strong working parties, under engineer officers, left to repair the road where it needed it; and Quitman and Twiggs, on the following day, could have come over it in nearly the same time. Meanwhile, Santa Anna would not have had time to block up the road, and to station his guerillas to annoy the passage, or to complete the fortifications of San Antonio without observation, and probably opposition; nor would he have had the opportunity of doing aught to oppose the advance over dangerous ground, as he did have, and which he took advantage of in a manner. Had not the various intrigues of his subordinates interfered, he would probably have done so to a greater extent.

2d. *The reconnaissances in the direction of San Antonio and Padierna of the 18th, and the construction of the road toward the latter point on the 19th of August.*

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That these were undertaken, and that the operations of the American army were delayed for a whole day on account of them, proves that the information of the locality upon which he was to operate possessed by the American general was imperfect. This was a matter of regret; yet the delay was absolutely necessary. Indeed, under the circumstances, it might have been better to have delayed further, until the different positions could have been more thoroughly examined. As it was, nothing very definite was known of the practicability of the route by either San Antonio or Padierna. The movement by that of San Antonio depended upon the practicability of turning the works through the Pedregal. By that of Padierna it was thought to depend entirely upon the practicability of making the road over the western extremity of the same bed of lava. That much opposition from the enemy to the completion of that difficult work was not apprehended by the general-in-chief, is evident from the nature of his general orders, No. 258, and those verbally transmitted to Pillow.\*

The movement of troops by the road which was being made was entirely experimental. Two divisions of the American army were sent over difficult ground in the direction of the enemy, on a duty of construction, with orders to fight a battle if it were necessary to drive the enemy from his position before the work could be completed. The na-

\* General Orders, No. 258. Executive Document, No. 65, Senate, first Session of the thirtieth Congress, p. 470.

ture of the movement entailed the necessity of fighting the battle upon ground perfectly known to the enemy and but partially known to the Americans. If the necessity which existed for immediate action forced this upon General Scott, it was to have been regretted, for he risked a battle for an uncertain object. What he was in search of was a route by which he could approach the city in the direction of Tacubaya and Chapultepec. When Pillow's and Twiggs's divisions marched from San Augustin, it was only believed that the road could be constructed over the ground.

The opposition by Valencia with his division and battery of twenty-two guns, and any reinforcement which he might receive, was left comparatively out of consideration. It proved to be, that the work of constructing a road across the Pedregal and ravine, which should be practicable for trains of heavy artillery and wagons, was one of exceeding difficulty; and Valencia, badly as he conducted himself, was, in his position, an obstacle which caused serious delay, annoyance, and doubt.

The nature of the orders given by General Scott on the occasion was such that the enemy was to have been allowed to open the battle when he pleased, and this, too, when the American troops were in the worst possible position. "Attack vigorously after having well observed where to strike,"\* was a simple but profound military instruction oft-

\* Napoleon.

en urged upon commanders under the greatest military man of modern times.

In this case, the point at which the blow was to have been delivered was not well observed, nor was the attack to have been vigorously made, but the troops were to have been allowed to enter into the action at the discretion of the enemy.

In such a movement as this was, it would seem to have been the part of good policy to have been sure that the road could have been finished and used in the manner proposed before the battle was risked, and that its terminus was in the hands of the Americans before the heavy part of the labor of construction was entered upon. To have gained the terminus, which was to have been at the junction of the mule-path with the San Angel road, it was necessary to move with celerity with such troops as could act over the ground. Infantry was all which did act with very positive effect.

Under any circumstances, the propriety of publishing to the Mexican commander, by means of working parties engaged in making a road immediately under his observation, that a difficult and dangerous route was about to be attempted by the American army, may well be questioned. It was, in effect, to warn him of the plans of the American general, and to warn him to make all possible preparations to counteract them.

The orders in relation to opening the battle, in case it should be necessary to fight one, were somewhat singular ; for, according to them, Twiggs was



to open the battle, and, should it become necessary, Pillow was to support him and assume the command, and he again to be superseded by Scott. This course, by which one general was to open the battle, another to carry it on, and a third to finish it, certainly had in it but little of that unity of action which is necessary in all things, and especially in all military affairs.

It is rare that three men can immediately and perfectly agree in any mode of action, and certainly it was not likely that they should, when with but little, if any, consultation the subject was presented to them in succession. If confusion were to have been brought about in the operations of the American army on that day, it is difficult to see what instructions could have been better calculated for such end than those actually given. The probability was, that in case the orders were literally obeyed, and Twiggs commenced the action upon his own responsibility, Pillow would be obliged either to continue operations which were not in accordance with his own views, or else to modify the plan of battle after the commencement of the conflict. But circumstances and the nature of resistance prevented the necessity of either, and the battle, commenced as it was, was under the supervision of one person.

3d. *The commencement of the battle of Contreras by General Pillow.*

By General Pillow, it is said, for the work of making the road was almost entirely given over

before the general disposition of the troops was entered upon. That the first movements of the battle were made in accordance with his suggestions to General Twiggs, and that he ordered Riley's and Cadwalader's movements upon San Geronimo, has been fully proven by sworn testimony, and decided by a legal tribunal.\*

In commencing the battle when he did, General Pillow obeyed the orders of General Scott, for the road could not be completed under the fire of a battery of twenty-two guns. In immediately taking the general superintendence himself, the orders were not literally obeyed; but in that he directed operations in which his own troops were to share, and for which, being the senior officer on the field, he must have been held responsible, none can find cause for censure.

As for the movements, they were those best calculated to insure the fall of the enemy's position. If the position were to be carried by direct assault, celerity was the first requisite, in order to enter with the Mexican skirmishers, who partially masked its fire. If an entrance could not be effected with them, the attack must have necessarily been made on the flanks or rear, for a battery of twenty-two guns is not to be run over when in full and uninterrupted play. It was necessary to send a corps in advance, in order to seize upon opportunity

\* Colonel Riley's, General Cadwalader's, Captain Hooker's, Lieutenant Ripley's, and other Testimony. Finding of the Court. Executive Document, No. 65, Senate, first Session of the thirtieth Congress.

for assault, should one be presented, as well as to attract the attention of the enemy while the operations on the flank progressed. The movement of the light batteries was experimental, and the location of them was of necessity left to the officers in the vicinity of the enemy. It could not have been expected that they would be very efficient against the superior weight of metal which would, of course, be brought to bear upon them, but, if they were to be used at all, they must be used in that direction. It was manifestly out of the question to send them by the right over the more rugged portions of the Pedregal ; and, in fact, in the position selected by Captain Lee, they were as well located as circumstances and the nature of the ground would permit.

That Riley was ordered to move toward the village of San Geronimo while Smith was advancing to the front, was necessary in order to save time, in the more probable event that the work could not be taken by direct assault. That the flank movement was made by the right instead of the left, proves a calculation of future chances, and that that which did really happen, the arrival of re-enforcements, was apprehended and provided for.

The countermand issued to Riley under the belief that Smith's advance would be successful, and that Riley's was impracticable, as his rear had not commenced its march, was a necessary consequence of the state of things believed to exist. As this belief soon proved to be erroneous, and it became



apparent that the direct assault could not succeed, and that the flank movement by San Geronimo was practicable for infantry, that movement was very properly persisted in and supported ; and further re-enforcement (the fifteenth regiment) was most properly sent, so soon as the approach of Santa Anna demonstrated the danger to the corps already on the right, and the increased importance of the position.

The dispositions which have been noticed were those which were made before the arrival of General Scott, and in them was comprised all of the general plan of the battle of Contreras. The movements ordered by General Scott during the afternoon were but in continuation of this plan, to which, by his approval of the disposition of the forces, he gave his sanction and confirmation.

The movement of the two regiments of Pierce's brigade, being one of support, ordered upon a call of General Twiggs, was in pursuance of the course originally determined upon.

The effect of these movements was to isolate Valencia by cutting off the re-enforcements under Santa Anna, and to gain positions whence the rear of the intrenched camp could be observed and attacked. Although many things interfered with the immediate execution of the attack, and the operations were spun out through the afternoon and night, yet it does not impeach the integrity of the first disposition of the troops ; nor does it disprove the fact that the way was opened and

preparation made by that disposition by which the victory was insured.

4th. *Riley's and Cadwalader's operations at and near San Geronimo.*

These were natural consequences of the movement in that direction, and both officers acted as they could only act in the faithful and skillful discharge of their duty. That Riley continued on through the village, and commenced the work of reconnaissance in preparation for assault, Santa Anna not being on the field, and being in expectation of support from Pillow's division, was in perfect keeping with the character of the veteran colonel. It proved that he, at least, understood his mission to be something more than one of quiescent occupation of the village or position, and of awaiting orders. By the movement, that information which enabled the assault on the following morning was gained.

That he fell back toward evening, not being in communication with Cadwalader, and believing himself unsupported, was necessary and proper under the circumstances, and would have been had he known the whole state of the case; for the occupation of the village of San Geronimo in force, until arrangements were made to crush Valencia's corps, was, of course, of the highest importance to the American cause.

By leaving a corps to hold San Geronimo while he progressed, Riley might have received early information of Cadwalader's approach; but he relied

upon it, as he had been informed that he would be supported. The reason that he was not informed of it when it occurred must be looked for in the nature of the ground, which did not permit a single officer of the staff or line to pass the Pedregal mounted, and the want of time on Cadwalader's part.

Cadwalader's position to intercept the march of the re-enforcements was boldly and courageously taken. It was in accordance with the spirit of his instructions, and, though hazardous, the necessity was great enough to justify him in running any risks to maintain himself. If he fell back, Riley was compromised with the whole Mexican army. Unless the colonel could maintain himself unsupported, the American army lost one of its finest brigades and suffered defeat; for, as the direct assault was impracticable, the only promise of success was in the flank movement. Whether success would have been certain after one brigade had been cut up, and the main Mexican army had gained her communication with Valencia, may well be questioned.

*5th. General Twiggs's movements directly against the intrenched camp, and General Smith's march to San Geronimo.*

The first of these were partial and experimental, and were originally intended so to be. After the action had commenced, as General Twiggs gave no orders to Smith,\* and remained in observation

\* General Smith's Testimony. Executive Document, No. 65, Senate, first Session of the thirtieth Congress, p. 99.



throughout the afternoon, until he sent a message to General Scott concerning a plan of attack, which was difficult of execution under any circumstances, and perfectly impracticable under those which did exist, it is very plain that he could have had but little opportunity of judging of the proper movements against the enemy. All which he did know at the time was that Smith had originally advanced about the time that he had, that Riley had gone over to the right, that he held two regiments of Pierce's brigade at his immediate disposal, and that the American batteries were in such action as it was possible for them to enter into ; and, certainly, an attack from the front or immediately on the flank was impracticable, when his only disposable troops were the ninth and twelfth regiments ; and before the message was sent, Smith was on his way to San Geronimo.

This movement was unauthorized, and made upon General Smith's own responsibility. His own account is in effect that, seeing the impracticability of assault in front, that the occupation of the village would cut the enemy's retreat, and being without orders from either his division or general commander, he moved to the village without any knowledge of the support which he might expect, or the position of Riley or Cadwalader,\* although before he started he had observed the approach of the Mexican skirmishers.

\* General Smith's Testimony. Executive Document, No. 65, Senate, first Session of the thirtieth Congress, p. 99, 103.

If the movement were made under such a belief, it was one which was passing bold ; but it was not of that character which might have been expected from an officer who bears so high a reputation for skill and talent as General Smith. He could not assume to direct the operations of the army, and unless he expected to find some force in the position to which he was marching, he was about to place his brigade in a critical situation, between two bodies of the enemy immensely superior in number. This would have entailed upon the commander-in-chief the necessity of changing the whole plan of operations in order to support him, or of allowing him to fight a doubtful battle for a point not included in the positions to be occupied or desired by the commander.

Such would have been the case had he gained the village before the enemy, who he saw, at the time when he commenced his movement, was in full march for it from a short distance, over open ground, while he had more than a mile to traverse of the most difficult nature. Every probability then was (unless he anticipated finding some American troops in the vicinity), that he would have made a most difficult movement, under fire, only to have found himself forestalled in the occupation of the desired point by the enemy. Then he would either be compelled to fall back, or to engage in battle at the close of day, without support, against an enemy in strong position and in overwhelming numbers.

If the movement were made under the belief that San Geronimo was, or was about to be occupied by the American forces, then it was well judged and proper. It proved that he saw the importance of the point, and, having secured the route from Padierna to the hill of Zacatepec from a sudden attack of the enemy on the American communications by the support which he left for the batteries, that he hastened to throw his main force to the most important position of the whole field ; the possession of which, in the opinion of the general-in-chief, and many others both before and after the event, was the security of the victory.

If he did so believe at the time, then he must have been mistaken in his recollections ; and when so much discrepancy exists between reasons as set forth and the general character of his action, there is much room for the entertainment of the idea ; for in the hurry of events of battle many things may be forgotten, and actions speak louder than words of the motives of military men.

That the movement would not have been in time to seize San Geronimo without opposition, is shown from the facts that Cadwalader had already intercepted the re-enforcement, and that Santa Anna had been in his front more than half an hour before Smith's arrival at the village ; but, as it happened, the arrival of his troops before nightfall was most opportune, and gave security for the possession of San Geronimo.

As for the disposition to assault Santa Anna's



position on the northern side of the ravine, it must be considered as rash and ill judged ; nor had General Smith any excuse for it, being without orders, except in an eager desire for battle. It was, in effect, a disposition for engaging in battle with 12,000 men, leaving 5000 in rear, on unknown ground, and within half an hour of darkness. Unless the 3500 Americans could beat the Mexican army in that time, they were entangled and in confusion for the night. They had no apparent chance for support, so far as Smith knew, and the attack was to have been made on that corps of the enemy which had free communication with its reserves. Had the action been begun with Santa Anna, he, of course, would have endeavored to make it good by bringing forward other troops ; and it is difficult to see how it could have been successfully finished in half an hour's time without artillery or cavalry on the American side, while the Mexicans had an abundance of both.

The true policy was that which was eventually adopted, of holding San Geronimo with a view of checking an advance, and attacking the isolated position of the intrenched camp.

6th. *The attack upon the intrenched camp, and the demonstration in its front.*

This was most undoubtedly the true point ; and although the attack was rather hazardous when it was first determined upon (as Shields's troops had not arrived, nor did General Smith expect them), yet the night was in favor of the operation. The

ground having been reconnoitered in the day, opportunity was allowed for silent and hidden movements, which, if successful, insured the attack upon the camp before the main Mexican force (believed to be still in position) could interfere. The result of an unexpected vigorous assault by 3500 Americans, from a commanding position, upon 5000 Mexicans taken in reverse, could not be doubted. The position once gained, it was fair to suppose could be maintained, as communication would be re-established by the mule-path with the troops in front of the camp and near the hill of Zacatepec. When Shields's brigade arrived, all which could be desired to render success certain was at hand; for, in the position of San Geronimo, that brigade could hold the main Mexican army in check, if it advanced, until the intrenched camp was carried and Valencia crushed. Then the greater part of the American army could have been opposed to the Mexican, having the prestige of success, advantageous position, and abundance of artillery, besides free communication all in its favor.

The diversion recommended by Smith to be made in front was proper, could not harm, and promised to assist, as it did most materially, in the achievement of the victory. It was, moreover, in keeping with the general character of the dispositions which had been made at the commencement of the battle.

As for the execution of the plan by the troops, it was admirable. Where irregularity occurred, it

arose from unavoidable causes. It was easier than had been anticipated, because Santa Anna had withdrawn to San Angel. That was the good fortune of the Americans.

The intervention of the night, and the anxiety felt on account of the impossibility of communicating between the different corps of the army, caused the attack upon the camp on the morning of the 20th to be considered as an isolated operation, entirely independent of the movements of the preceding day. The complete success with which the attack was attended gave to the commander of the troops immediately engaged all the honor of directing the movements resulting in the destruction of Valencia's corps. In the dazzle of the conflict of arms, the great movements of the 19th, which isolated the position, and rendered its fall certain so long as the village of San Geronimo was held by American troops, were lost sight of.

For the immediate assault General Smith is undoubtedly entitled to honor. As he acted without orders, he might have been severely blamed in case of ill success; and he could have anticipated no less, as, according to his own account, an officer in command of a small corps had undertaken an unauthorized movement, which might have disarranged the whole detail of battle. But as for the strategical movements by which the troops were placed in the position which enabled the attack to be made with effective success, General Smith had no lot or share in their direction or execution. He



was not immediately present when they were made; he did not suggest or counsel them; and his rank was such that he could not, if he would, have ordered the original movement of any corps. They were ordered by another officer, the senior on the field before the arrival of General Scott; and as he undoubtedly would have had the responsibility in case of ill success (and, indeed, during the doubt which existed on the night of the 19th, many murmurs from those high in rank were made against the dispositions and their author, without reflection), the credit of skillful disposition to the end of the victory belongs, and in the judgment of impartial history must attach, to him. The execution of the important movements of the battle was accomplished by Riley and Cadwalader. Riley showed that the march was practicable, and gained that information which enabled Smith to act upon accurate data when he did act. Cadwalader, by his bold stand in front of Santa Anna, performed the most important service of the field; and that stand by which the village of San Geronimo was occupied, arrested the enemy's re-enforcements,\* and ultimately decided the battle.

7th. *General Scott's dispositions on the morning of the 20th, and the flank march from the intrench-*

\* General Scott's Official Report. Executive Document, No. 1, House of Representatives, first Session of the thirtieth Congress, p. 305. General Scott's Testimony. Executive Document, No. 65, Senate, first Session of the thirtieth Congress, p. 73.

"The whole operation of the 20th was based on the possession of the village."—*General Smith's Testimony. Executive Document, No. 65, Senate, first Session of the thirtieth Congress, p. 104.*

## II.—U

*ed camp by San Angel upon the fortified position of San Antonio.*

The arrangements of General Scott to place a corps in position near the field of battle, which might be used to cover a retreat or insure a victory, were well judged, and the corps was as strong as circumstances would permit; for Coapa could not be abandoned with impunity, neither could the garrison of San Augustin be reduced with safety in the presence of Alvarez's guerillas. One brigade from Worth's division was all which could in safety have been put in motion, and it was well timed for service in the doubt which existed at San Augustin after the failure in the commencement of the attack at three o'clock in the morning, which was the hour appointed and reported by Smith. A determination to leave no chance for defeat by a change of circumstances, or on account of premature information of a victory, was manifested by the continued march of Garland's brigade until the news was fully confirmed.

The pursuit commenced by Generals Twiggs and Smith, and continued by General Pillow to San Angel, was only insuring the victory, and that it was continued to that point immediately after the fall of the camp was but a consequence of the operations of the battle of Contreras. The continued movement upon Coyacan and San Antonio was the commencement of another series of operations, and can therefore be spoken of by itself.

It was the movement of corps of one army against

a central force, the divided corps having long and circuitous routes of communication with each other, while the enemy had short and easy communication, and could concentrate with rapidity. It has been truly said that such movement is against all principle, and under many circumstances the present case would have formed no exception.

But as the full difficulty of opening a route by the Pedregal had become apparent after the battle of Contreras was ended, the question presented was, whether the labor of constructing the road until it was made practicable for the passage of the whole train of the army should be persisted in ? or should that purpose be abandoned, and the main army, while following up the victory, present itself by the flank march in rear of San Antonio, which Worth held in check, or attacked in front ?

The knowledge that good roads led from San Antonio toward Tacubaya and Chapultepec, and the importance of time to the American army, went to advise the hazard of the movement. If successful, it insured the fall of San Antonio, and opened the roads ; for San Antonio, attacked in front and rear, must fall ; and even if the main American army engaged the Mexican army in the field while Worth assaulted San Antonio, there was much chance of the victory of either or both.

Celerity and caution combined were necessary to insure success ; and therefore, when the idea was suggested to General Scott, his orders were



“to move on, but to move cautiously.”\* That he had not considered the movement in reference to immediate action before his arrival at the intrenched camp and the receipt of Pillow’s message, was of necessity owing to his want of information concerning the victory of Contreras. Of that he had been assured but a short time; but his almost immediate acquiescence in the proposed movement shows that such would probably have been his own course of action.

8th. *General Worth’s operations against San Antonio.*

Viewed as isolated operations of one force upon a single point, these must be considered as well judged. Their merit was not fairly brought to the issue of battle, as Bravo fell back before the movement of Worth’s troops were completed, and the action was therefore partial.

The fact that Bravo fell back under orders from Santa Anna, being threatened on the flank and in rear by the main army, and in front and on the flank by Worth, is an argument in favor of the march of the former by San Angel to Coyacan.

General Scott has stated that General Worth had orders from him to hold himself in readiness to fall on in front of San Antonio so soon as it was menaced by Pillow’s and Twiggs’s divisions from the rear.† General Worth did not so understand

\* Lieutenant Davis’s Testimony. Executive Document, No. 65, Senate, first Session of the thirtieth Congress, p. 210.

† General Scott’s Report. Executive Document, No. 1, House of Representatives, first Session of the thirtieth Congress, p. 308.

it, but acted under the general instructions and discretion granted by the general-in-chief.\* To show that this was the case, it is only necessary to revert to the fact that at least one hour before he could have heard any thing of the main army he put Clarke's brigade in motion to accomplish the same end for which the flank march through San Angel and Coyacan was designed, and had made his arrangements to assault and carry the point without any reference to other troops. Why he should have run the risk of a battle with his own division alone, if he had known of the march of the main force, it is difficult to see, unless, indeed, his desire for distinction exceeded his prudence. In the latter case, it is difficult to see why so flagrant a violation of orders as his operations would have been has been silently passed over by the general-in-chief in subsequent controversies.

Had the orders reached Worth and been obeyed, it would probably have been better; for although, in consequence of the operations of the American army, San Antonio did indeed fall, yet there was no unity of action toward a single object. Other operations were immediately commenced, without reconnoissance, without communication between the corps, and upon inaccurate, or rather imperfect information, which brought on the battle of Churubusco.

#### 10th. *The battle of Churubusco.*

\* General Worth's Report. Executive Document, No. 1, House of Representatives, first Session of the thirtieth Congress, p. 316.

As this battle was commenced by a battalion just following up the success of Worth's operations against San Antonio; fallen into and continued by Twiggs's troops while marching to reach the San Antonio road and to cut off the retreat of the enemy; entered into by Worth's whole division without orders from head-quarters; and by Pillow, with Cadwalader's brigade, while under orders to attack San Antonio in flank, it is very clear that, whatever of merit there may have been in the first general disposition of the troops, the credit of it belongs to fortune, and to no general officer whatever.

But to the American general, and to his officers and men, there does attach the merit of firmness and determined courage, in continuing the battle at all risks and all hazards. This was a matter of necessity; for when the battle had once opened, the corps being without general orders, and some without communication, the safety of the whole required that each should continue its assault in the most vigorous and decided manner. Had any one been beaten, it is difficult to see how the victory could have been achieved.

When the position of the Mexican line was developed, the movement ordered by General Scott of Pierce's and Shield's brigades was that which promised more beneficial results than any other which could have been made. The heavy report of arms heard at Coyacan announced that Worth's, Pillow's, and Twiggs's troops were in close and continued combat, and an attack in rear of the



enemy's position was certainly the most promising. Nevertheless, it was experimental, on account of the hurry in which the battle had been opened, and the position of the Mexican reserve could not have been counted upon. In consequence, the command in that direction was for a time in a position of most imminent peril. It must have suffered still more severely had not the tête du pont fallen as it did fall before Worth's and Pillow's attack. The effect of the movement was to occupy the attention of the reserve while the attacks in front progressed, and to leave opposed to the American troops there engaged, only the same amount of Mexican strength present at the commencement of the action; and the fall of the important point, the tête du pont, insured the complete victory, as is usually the case in all battles.

But, brilliant as was the victory, it was neither necessary nor proper to fight the battle at all against the fortified positions of the enemy. Had the corps of the American army been reunited at San Antonio while time was taken for reconnaissance, it would very soon have been ascertained.

Cross roads lead from Coyacan to the San Angel road, which enters the city by the garita of El Niño Perdido. Of all the garitas of Mexico, this was the only one not fortified at the time, and the road which led to it was without any batteries or intrenchments. The ground was as good, if not better, than any about the capital.

Had Coyacan been held while Worth's and Quit-

man's divisions came up with the train of the army from San Augustin, and had the American army moved upon the city by the San Angel road so soon as a new depôt had been established, the enemy must have fought in the open field ; for his fortified positions about Churubusco would have been completely turned, and a route would have been gained by the Americans without any fortifications to impede an advance upon the capital.

Had the system of operations which resulted in the fall of San Antonio been confined to that object, this course of action would undoubtedly have been adopted. The object for which the flank march had been undertaken having been gained, the army would have been reunited, and ready to recommence operations in full force for one end.

That end would have been well known and understood. Much of the loss which befell the assailants in the battle of Churubusco would have been avoided ; for the result of an action in the field, where the splendid light artillery of the Americans could have had full play, can not for one instant be doubted. The moral effect of the victory on the Mexicans would have been the same as that which did occur.

It may be said that, in case such action had been taken, the American flank would have been given to the enemy at Churubusco. That would have been the case. Such had also been the case throughout the whole system of operations, and it could not have been more dangerous to operate in that man-

ner than it had been to pass El Peñon and attack Mexicalcingo; to march by the southern shore of Lake Chalco; to move on Padierna, or by San Angel and Coyacan on San Antonio. Moreover, the roads were good, just out of range from the enemy's main works, and the movement was perfectly practicable. The course of action, had it been open for discussion, could very readily have been decided by the maxim, "Never attack a position in front which you can gain by turning."\* The positions could have been gained by turning; and had the movements been conducted as they should, and probably would have been, there would not have been "a flank march in the presence of an enemy." The American army would have been presented, without serious danger from his fortifications, in full force and compact order, on the enemy's flank and rear. Had he wished to prevent it, he must have come out of his intrenchments and fought in the field, which was to have been desired by the American general.

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The Mexican operations have been too freely spoken of in the body of the narrative to require much comment.

Valencia's were perfectly inconsistent with military art, reason, or judgment. General Santa Anna must have been so much disconcerted by the intrigues of subordinates as to have lost the confi-

\* Napoleon.



dence in his army, which is among the first requisites to enable a general to conduct any operations, either offensive or defensive, with success.

Had he been able to effect a junction with Valencia, the victory of Contreras had not been won by the Americans. Inasmuch as that was prevented by Cadwalader's occupation of San Geronimo, he might have left Valencia to the fate which befell him, and, had his troops been reliable, have fallen with his whole overwhelming force on Worth at Coapa with more chance of success. If Worth's single division could have been speedily crushed, and the victory followed to San Augustin, the whole train of the American army would have been endangered, while the main body was entangled in the Pedregal. But the sturdy resistance which Worth's troops, in defensive position, would have made, would have gone far to render the result doubtful, even had the Mexican army been united under skillful generals. Where faction and intrigue had raised dissensions and disaffections, Santa Anna may well have doubted it.

His speedy retreat from San Angel to Churubusco, and the abandonment of San Antonio, were well calculated to bring the American army, as they did, upon the fortifications of Churubusco.

These were his chosen positions, and, with one exception, the battle commenced as he desired it should.

The Americans were a little too fast, and, when attacked, he had not all of his artillery or force in

position. That confusion which must ensue in such an event with troops not too well disciplined, and laboring under the consciousness of many and recent defeats, especially when discord exists among the commanders, did ensue. In consequence, and in spite of the partial restoration of order and brave individual resistance, the positions were lost before the vigorous and continued assault of the Americans.

Stratagems which have for their object to draw an enemy into a chosen field of battle must be carefully executed, and all things should be in readiness for his reception. If one link in the chain is broken, the barrier against which he is brought falls, and the operation results in defeat.

The operations of the American against the Mexican army in the valley of Mexico afford an example of the tremendous effect of the prestige of victory, and of the moral force of an army, however small its numbers, in comparison with those of an enemy less skilled and with less confidence. They also afford an example of the inefficiency of extensive lines of intrenchments for defense when vigorously attacked by troops better than the defenders.

## CHAPTER X.

Proposals for an Armistice—Views of American General Officers—General Scott's Instructions to American Commissioners—Terms of the Armistice—Mr. Trist commences Negotiations—Appointment of Mexican Commissioners—Action of President Santa Anna—First Meetings of Commissioners—Mexican Opposition to Negotiations—Attack of Leperos on American Train in the City—Protests by Deputies and State Authorities—American Terms of Peace—Mexican Reply—Negotiations—Offer of Mr. Trist—Opinion in the American Army—Action of General Scott—Failure of Negotiations—End of the Armistice—State of the American Army—Trial and Execution of Deserters.

DURING the night of the 20th of August, several persons connected with the British embassy in Mexico, including the secretary of legation and the consul general, came out of the city and proceeded to General Scott's head-quarters at San Augustin.\* They represented to him that the moment was favorable for opening negotiations, and that peace could readily be obtained provided he did not enter the capital by force and disperse the government. The arguments made use of to induce him to refrain from seizing the fruit of his conquest were based upon the peculiar nature of the Mexican people, and their obstinate national vanity. It was asserted as a belief that, should he force his entrance, the government would be dispersed beyond the possibility of reassembling; that a spirit

\* Lieutenant-colonel Hitchcock's Letter. Executive Document, No. 65, Senate, first Session of the thirtieth Congress, p. 524.



of desperation would be aroused throughout the country; and that the United States would be obliged to carry on a war of conquest of infinite duration.

These opinions, expressed by high officers of a neutral power, had much weight with General Scott, and deeply impressed him with the danger of seizing the capital;\* but, before they were presented to him in this manner, he was determined to act in accordance with the course indicated by the Puebla correspondence; and as he had restrained the enthusiasm of the troops, he intended to halt and offer negotiations. That this was his intention is evident; for, had it not been, he would have pursued the victory of Churubusco at least to the entrance of the capital on the 20th of August. That night he prepared a paper, presenting to the Mexican president the alternative of surrendering the city or of agreeing to an armistice, with a pledge to enter at once into the negotiation of a treaty.†

On the following morning the army was posted in the different villages in the vicinity, in such a manner that it was perfectly evident that no immediate action was to be taken in prosecution of the victories. Worth's division was ordered to occupy Tacubaya, Pillow's Mixcoac, Twiggs's San Angel, and Quitman's to remain at San Augustin.

\* General Scott's Report. Executive Document, No. 1, House of Representatives, first Session of the thirtieth Congress, p. 314.

† *Idem ibidem.*

The general-in-chief fixed his own head-quarters at Tacubaya. These positions were taken up without a demonstration of opposition, although, when Tacubaya was occupied, the commander of the castle of Chapultepec required a particular guarantee of the armistice which it was supposed was about to be agreed upon. As such was the case, the understanding that the castle should not be attacked, and that it was not to open fire upon the town, which it commanded at long range, was readily admitted.

While on his way from San Augustin to Tacubaya, General Scott had been met at the village of Coyacan by a deputation bearing proposals for a temporary armistice from Santa Anna. The point of disagreement between the general and the Mexican president had been upon taking the initiative in offering negotiations. Though desirous of entering into them in order to gain a chance for peace, General Scott did not like the idea of placing himself in the attitude of the vanquished. He had therefore determined to adopt a middle course, and send in a flag with an offer, accompanied by a demanded alternative.

Santa Anna, fearful of being compromised with his own people, did not wish to admit that he had no longer the power of defending the capital. But the ill fortune of the Mexicans in battle had rendered it absolutely necessary that he should gain time, whether he was to make peace or to continue the struggle. In consequence, General Mora y Vil-

lamil and Señor Arrangoiz were sent for the avowed purpose of negotiating an armistice for the burial of the dead, and without any reference to negotiating a treaty. It was said in Mexico that, during Mora's absence, Santa Anna disavowed the act of the minister through whom the order had been given.\* If this were true, it was doubtless the intention of the wily intriguer to provide for the contingency of the negotiation being unfavorably received by the Congress and people by the sacrifice of his minister. His subsequent conduct proves that he intended to accept and profit by the armistice, could he so far control popular opinion that it should be tolerated. And, at the time, there is no doubt that he was in communication with Mr. Bankhead, the British ambassador, and Mr. McIntosh, the consul general, and other "intelligent neutrals," who were giving their advice to General Scott to abstain from entering the city.

When Mora y Villamil met the American general at Coyacan with a proposal for an armistice, the initiative had been in a manner taken by the Mexicans. Scott therefore, while he refused the armistice on the terms proposed, altered his communication to the Mexican president, and omitted the demand for the surrender of the city. He offered an armistice, having in view the immediate opening of negotiations.†

\* Interrupted Mexican Correspondence. Executive Document, No. 65, Senate, first Session of the thirtieth Congress, p. 445.

† Executive Document, No. 52, Senate, first Session of the thirtieth Congress, p. 192.



As Santa Anna had expressed himself dissatisfied by Señor Pacheco's order to General Mora y Villamil, upon receiving this proposition he chose to assume with his own people that the initiative had been taken by Scott, and that he had resolved to hear his propositions.\*

This audience he certainly could very well afford to grant, as all the advantages of time were allowed him, and every disadvantage was taken by his adversary. Therefore, in keeping with his proposed policy, he agreed to conclude an armistice, and appointed Generals Mora y Villamil and Quijano as commissioners to negotiate the terms.

On the morning of the 22d of August, General Scott having received notification of the agreement, appointed Generals Quitman, Persifor F. Smith, and Pierce as the commissioners on his part. While he was engaged in drawing up a project by which they were to be guided, Generals Worth and Pillow successively arrived at headquarters. Both, at the time, knew of the proposed measure. Worth had lately been informed of it, and Pillow was cognizant of the whole matter from the first informal correspondence which had taken place.

Having read to the two generals his project of articles so far as completed, General Scott remarked that if they would retire until he had finished his draft, he would read the whole for their infor-

\* Santa Anna's Manifesto, August 23d, 1847. Executive Document, No. 65, Senate, first Session of the thirtieth Congress, p. 542.

mation. They did retire, and while they remained in waiting the completion, the proposed terms became the subject of conversation.

Worth had been observing the country, since his arrival at Tacubaya, with reference to its military points, and had become fully settled in his own mind that the Castle of Chapultepec was of great importance. He desired that its surrender should be made a *sine qua non* in the negotiation of an armistice. He believed that the danger of dispersing the government of Mexico, and the consequent failure of peaceful negotiation, required that the victory of the American army should not be prosecuted to the occupation of the capital. But while he was in favor of manifesting such forbearance, he thought that a guarantee of good faith should be demanded and obtained before it was agreed upon.

Pillow was opposed to the whole negotiation on account of the danger of Mexican treachery, which he believed was more threatening to the army and the cause of the United States than the dispersion of the Mexican government. He desired the surrender of the capital, which was the most complete guarantee of immediate peace or future conquest.

Considering that the possession of Chapultepec would facilitate the capture of the capital, Worth believed that it was only necessary to demand that, as then, in the event of treachery or failure in the negotiations, the army would have a strong point, and the capital could be seized. The sacrifice of

the mean time he believed would be one of convenience rather than of interest.

But upon the surrender of Chapultepec he wished the general-in-chief to insist as a *sine qua non*; and when the two generals returned to General Scott's room, he made known his views. General Pillow coincided in the wish expressed by General Worth, since the surrender of the city he was certain General Scott would not demand. Scott did not immediately agree with Worth about the importance of Chapultepec, but sent for his engineer officers to consult them on the subject. Soon after, Worth and Pillow left him, as the Mexican commissioners had been announced.\*

Upon reaching his head-quarters at Mixcoac, Pillow addressed a note to the general-in-chief, urging upon him the propriety of certain modifications in the proposed terms, which would allow an intercourse with the city. This, at least, he conceived to be due to the army, and that its denial would not fail to irritate the feelings of officers and soldiers. The note concluded by urging the general-in-chief to demand the surrender of Chapultepec and the rights of intercourse with the city, and with the expression of the belief that neither the army nor the country would be satisfied with different terms.†

The commissioners for the arrangement of the

\* General Worth's Testimony. Executive Document, No. 65, Senate, first Session of the thirtieth Congress, p. 191-193.

† General Pillow to General Scott. Idem, p. 520.



terms of the convention met late on the afternoon of the 22d. The projet which General Scott delivered to Quitman, to serve as the basis of the action of his commissioners, comprised ten articles. All were carefully worded, in such manner as to give no insult to Mexican vanity, and the question of right to dictate terms was throughout carefully abstained from, as well as the expression of any doubt of good faith, or the requisition of any guarantee.

The 1st, 2d, 3d, and 4th articles of the projet declared the existence of the armistice and its object, and prohibited either army from strengthening its position or receiving any re-enforcement during the continuance of the convention. It was to terminate on the conclusion of negotiations, or upon twenty-four hours' notice from either commander.\*

Article 5th was carefully worded, to gain, without offense, the object which had been recommended by Worth and Pillow, and which General Scott, upon consideration, had decided upon endeavoring to obtain. It read as follows :

“ 5th. Pending the armistice, the American army shall occupy no position, either for encampment or quarters, within range of the guns of the city of Mexico, nor make any military reconnaissance within such range ; and the Mexican forces on the southwest and west of the city of Mexico, includ-

\* Projet. Executive Document, No. 65, Senate, first Session of the thirtieth Congress, p. 543.

ing the garrison of Chapultepec, shall immediately retire within musket shot of that city."\*

This article, if agreed upon, would have been, in effect, to give possession of Chapultepec to the American army, and, although the demand is very indirectly set forth, could have been introduced for no other purpose.

Articles 6th and 7th prohibited intercourse between the positions of the two armies, except under flags of truce, upon business of correspondence, and that of obtaining supplies, which was to be allowed to either army from the positions occupied by the other.

The 8th stipulated for the exchange of the American prisoners remaining in Mexican custody for an equal number of Mexican prisoners, thus waiving the previous exchanges which had been made by General Taylor, as well as those offered by General Scott at Puebla.

Article 9th provided that the American citizens, residents of Mexico, who had been expelled, should be allowed to return to their business and families without delay or molestation.

Article 10th, that messengers which either army might desire to send on the route to Vera Cruz should be furnished with passports from the opposite commander, guaranteed the safety of the messenger bearing the passports, and further provided that, as a proof of the desire of his nation

\* Projét. Executive Document, No. 65, Senate, first Session of the thirtieth Congress, p. 543.

that peace should be re-established, the Mexican president should at once withdraw all his guerillas from the line.\*

The first four of these articles were readily admitted by the Mexican commissioners, with only the modification of an extension of the notice required for the rupture of the armistice from twenty-four to forty-eight hours' notice.

The 5th article they would not admit. It was allowed that the American general possessed the power to enforce it, but they enlarged upon the danger of humiliating the Mexican pride if he wished to obtain a peace. It was said that a surrender of Chapultepec would have as evil an effect as a surrender of the capital. The question presented by them was, whether the American general would insist upon guarantees, and surrender all hope of peace, both present and future, or leave the Mexican army in the positions which it then occupied, and insure the commencement of negotiations? After much discussion, the question was referred to General Scott, and he allowed his commissioners to give up the point. The following was substituted for article 5th of the projet:

5th. "Neither army, nor any detachments from it, shall advance beyond the line it at present occupies."†

Articles 6th, 7th, 8th, and 9th were all admitted

\* Projét. Executive Document, No. 65, Senate, first Session of the thirtieth Congress, p. 543.

† General Orders, No. 262. Executive Document, No. 1, House of Representatives, first Session of the thirtieth Congress, p. 356.



by the Mexican commissioners; but the latter part of the 10th, which guaranteed the safety of the messengers who might be sent, and provided for the withdrawal of the guerillas, was stricken out, inasmuch as there were many robber bands as well as guerillas whose chiefs would pay no attention to the orders of the Mexican president.

To the ten articles included in the original project of General Scott, six others were added. The 11th, 12th, 13th, and 14th provided for the continued administration of Mexican laws, and the security of persons and property in towns and villages held by the American army, the parole of wounded prisoners, and the free passage of Mexican medical officers. The 15th provided for the execution of the terms of the armistice, and the 16th fixed a period for its ratification.\*

The American commissioners were divided in their opinions of the propriety of the measure. General Quitman did not approve of it. General Pierce was also opposed to it when he first took his seat, but his opinion was changed by the discussion of the subject. General Smith was originally in favor of it, and when Pierce came to his support, the majority of the commission was in favor of the convention. All three of the officers affixed their names to the instrument.

It was ratified by General Scott on the 23d, with the stipulation that the word supplies mentioned

\* General Orders, No. 262. Executive Document, No. 1, House of Representatives, first Session of the thirtieth Congress, p. 356.

in the 7th article, should include every want of an army, arms, ammunition, and money, as well as subsistence and clothing. General Santa Anna ratified it on the 24th, with the exception of the 9th article, which he rejected, and limiting the signification of "supplies" so as to exclude arms and ammunition, but allowing all other wants of an army.\*

Mr. Trist commenced his diplomatic proceedings on the 25th of August. On that day he addressed a note to Señor Pacheco, who, as the armistice had been concluded, retained his place as minister of foreign relations, calling his attention to the armistice, and announcing that he was ready to commence the negotiation of a treaty. He requested that an early day might be appointed for the meeting of the commissioners on the part of Mexico.†

Señor Pacheco replied on the 26th, to the effect that his government was then engaged in the appointment of commissioners, who, it was said, would be ready to hear the propositions of the United States, at the town of Atzacapuzalco, at four o'clock on the afternoon of the 27th.‡

The first appointments made by the Mexican government were General Herrera, ex-president, Don Antonio Fernandez Monjardin, president of the Supreme Court, and Don Antonio Garay. All three of these declined the appointment, the two

\* General Orders, No. 262. Executive Document, No. 1, House of Representatives, first Session of the thirtieth Congress, p. 358.

† Executive Document, No. 52, Senate, first Session of the thirtieth Congress, p. 193.

‡ Idem, p. 193-4.

latter for the asserted reason that they felt themselves unqualified for the discharge of the delicate and embarrassing duties which it would devolve upon them. The government did not insist upon their acceptance of the appointment.\*

General Herrera based his refusal upon the ground that his former administration had become unpopular, and that he had been thrust from the presidency because he had been willing to receive a commissioner empowered to settle the dispute at the commencement of the controversy. It appeared to him that, under the circumstances, the adjustment of the difficulty, however honorable it might be, would be worse received than if effected by the agency of those who had taken no part in the affair.

In reply, Señor Pacheco stated that Santa Anna insisted upon the acceptance of the appointment on account of the very reasons which were set forth as those for which Herrera declined; "for," said the note, "they bear witness that two different administrations, under different circumstances, have come to the same conclusion on one essential point, which is, the expediency of hearing the propositions which are offered for the purpose of terminating the evils of war."

The reply closed by informing General Herrera of the meeting appointed for the following day,

\* Señor Pacheco to General Herrera, and Señors Monjardin and Garay, and their replies, August 25th, 1847, published by the Mexican government in the *Diario del Gobierno*.



and that instructions for the guidance of the commissioners would be handed him by the president.\*

Thus in a manner compelled to act, Herrera accepted the appointment, and Santa Anna gained the influence of his name to support the measure of opening negotiations. This desire, doubtless, was the reason for the appointment, for the majority of the better classes of Mexico was devoted to Herrera. Of this influence it is probable that Herrera wished to deprive him when he at first refused to act. In place of the commissioners who were allowed to decline, General Mora y Villamil, and Señors Couto and Atristain, two lawyers and statesmen of distinction, were selected. A Señor Arroyo was appointed the secretary and interpreter, and the commission was constituted.†

The instructions under which negotiations were to be opened were determined upon at a meeting of the Mexican cabinet on the 25th. The powers of the commissioners were exceedingly limited, and extended no further than to a simple reception and report upon the American propositions. The projet of a treaty had been drawn up and approved previous to the meeting of the 25th, but it was not delivered to the commissioners for some days afterward.‡

President Santa Anna was doubtless feeling his

\* Señor Pacheco to General Herrera, August 26th, 1847. *Diario del Gobierno*.

† Letters of Appointment. *Idem*.

‡ Instructions to Mexican Commissioners. *Idem*.

way, and carefully weighing the chances of gaining popularity and security for himself, as well as advantage to the Mexican cause. The course which he adopted was well calculated to gain time, which was most necessary, either in case he was to win glory and military reputation by the renewal of hostilities, or to receive the one million of dollars stipulated for in the Puebla correspondence. The town of Atzacapuzalco, which had been designated for the meeting of the commission, was some miles to the northwest of Mexico. It was represented as being equidistant between the two armies, and therefore convenient. In fact, it was far removed from either, and its situation rendered it a fitter place for the conferences, if it was desired to produce delay, than it was to hasten the negotiation.

The first meeting of the commissioners took place, as had been appointed, on the 27th of August, and the proceedings were confined to the exchange of powers, and the delivery and receipt of the propositions of the American government. Fearing lest Mr. Trist would remark upon the limitation of their powers, the Mexican commissioners informed him that when the time for treating came, plenary powers would be presented. Upon this, Mr. Trist submitted the projet of a treaty which he had brought from Washington. He proposed to change the place of meeting to a house on the causeway between Chapultepec and the city; and with an appointment of another meeting at

Atzacapuzalco for the following day, the first conference ended.\*

The second, which took place according to appointment, had nothing to characterize it, except that a delay of three days was required in order to allow the Mexican government time to deliberate upon the propositions contained in the submitted project. The next meeting was appointed for the 1st of September, when the Mexican commissioners informed Mr. Trist that they would meet him at the house of Alfaro, the place which he had indicated, with powers corresponding to his.†

In the mean time much opposition had been manifested to the proposed negotiation, both in the city of Mexico and the neighboring states. One of the first steps which Santa Anna had taken had been to summon a meeting of Congress. This had been done on the 20th; but, in obedience to the summons, only twenty-six deputies had taken their seats. The remainder either refused to attend, or had already left the city to avoid the responsibility of voting. In excuse for thus leaving, they referred to a resolution, passed some time previously, which changed the place of meeting in case the capital was in danger from the invading army.

The opponents of Santa Anna were opposed to the negotiation, and it appeared that their political intrigues were of more importance to many Mexi-

\* Mexican Commissioners' Report, and Mr. Trist to Mr. Buchanan, August 29th, 1847. Executive Document, No. 52, Senate, first Session of the thirtieth Congress, p. 191.

† Idem ibidem.



cans than their national existence. Of this class there were many general officers of the army, and heedless and reckless when not in immediate conflict with the enemy, now they protested loudly against treating in the presence of the American army. The common people of the city were by no means in favor of the measure, so far as they understood any thing about it. The hatred of the North Americans had increased with their success; the panic occasioned by the result of the battles had subsided when it was known that the enemy was not immediately to enter the city; and, with characteristic elasticity of spirit, the leperos shouted the cry of "Mueran los Yankuies" during the negotiation as loudly as ever. Whether they were controlled by Santa Anna or other leaders of factions is a question.

Many believed at the time that the Mexican president was opposed to the treaty, and only sought delay in order to reorganize his army and to strengthen his interior line of defense. It is, however, more than probable that at first he wished to make the treaty, if possible, though he must have distrusted the success of the negotiation. That he did fortify and reorganize his army, which he commenced to do at once, can only be considered as a precautionary measure, which no Mexican general could have been expected to forego simply on account of its contravention of one of the articles of a military agreement. While he had powerful and able negotiators, upon whose

weight of character he could rely for support in case of the conclusion of the treaty, he kept himself as far aloof from committal on either side as possible, or, rather, he committed himself on both to an equal degree. The appointment of commissioners and the opening of negotiations spoke for themselves. To counterbalance them, he proclaimed to the opponents of peace his desire for maintaining the national honor and the necessity for delay.

Two days after the conclusion of the armistice, an American train was sent into the capital for the purpose of bringing out supplies. This having been stipulated for in the seventh article of the convention, it was of course unattended by any escort. Under guidance of the Mexican officer charged with the execution of the terms of the armistice, it proceeded to the great square of the city. There it was attacked by a mob of leperos, who stoned the teamsters, and effectually interrupted the transaction of the business. It was with much difficulty that the train was extricated from the crowd, and took the road back to the American lines.

During the riot, the Mexican authorities for some time took no measures to interfere with the rioters, although Santa Anna himself was overlooking the scene from one of the windows of the palace. Finally, on the appeal of the American quartermaster, who accompanied the train, a troop of lancers was ordered to charge and put a stop to the

tumult. The order was executed in a manner which showed no great disposition to obey it, even if it were intended that it should be executed in good faith.

For this occurrence the Mexican officers made many apologies, and proposed another way of obtaining the supplies. It was said that the procurement of them in open day could not fail to arouse the indignation of the populace, and that any energetic interference on the part of the Mexican troops would bring so much odium on the government, already tottering and threatened by the powerful opposition to the proposed negotiation, as to render its power entirely nugatory. The apologies, reasons, and propositions were received and accepted by the American general-in-chief. Thenceforward the necessary supplies were obtained from the city by night, and in the manner proposed on the part of Santa Anna. Pack mules were substituted for wagons, and the train entered the city, was laden, and returned by night, being escorted by Mexican troops beyond their lines. And this was allowed and executed in good faith until the negotiations drew near to a close.

If this tumult were countenanced or instigated by Santa Anna, his object must have been, besides that of making a demonstration of his hostility to the Americans before the populace, to cause such a change as was made in the method of obtaining supplies; for by the change he prevented the entrance of American agents by day, and the observa-



tion which they could not fail to make upon the fortifications which were in process of repair and erection.

The opposition to the proposed negotiation from without the walls of the capital was demonstrated by the refusal of the deputies, within reach of the summons for the meeting of Congress, to return, the protests of several juntas of them, and of the authorities of neighboring states. Of these, the most important, and which, from their place of date, were earliest received in the capital, were the protests of eight representatives from the states of Mexico, Jalisco, and Zacatecas, and of the governor of the State of Mexico, Olaguibel.

The first of them was drawn up at Toluca on the 22d of August, and signed by some of the most prominent and influential members of Congress. Valentin Gomez Farias, who had become again prominent in the turns of the political wheel, was at their head. The protest was exceedingly strong in its language, and reminded Santa Anna that any overt act in the way of the execution of a treaty, which had not the ratification of Congress, would bring him under the provisions of the law of April 20, which declared such an act to be one of treason. The signers refused to meet in the city of Mexico, as summoned, to ratify a treaty made under the guns of the enemy.

Olaguibel's protest was principally denunciatory of Santa Anna; but still, the whole measure of negotiating a peace, under existing circumstances,

was denounced. The ability and will of the Mexican nation to carry on the war were strongly asserted. The same governor issued, at the same time, a proclamation, calling upon the inhabitants of his state to resist the invaders, and reminding them of the ten years' war of independence. Whatever effect this may have had upon those to whom it was addressed, the proclamation, like the protest, was doubtless put forth to demonstrate the patriotism of the governor as compared with Santa Anna, to whom he was bitterly hostile.

Other protests and proclamations soon after came in from various quarters, and the president was openly accused of high treason by one of the deputies, who carried his accusation so far as to draw up and publish articles of impeachment. All these demonstrations of opposition made it necessary for General Santa Anna to proceed with great caution. Accordingly, the projet which had been drawn up and approved at a meeting of the ministers on the 25th, was reconsidered and modified on the 30th, so as to answer the propositions set forth in the projet submitted by Mr. Trist.

The American propositions required from Mexico, as the conditions of peace, the relinquishment of all claim to Texas, and the establishment and recognition of the following boundary: The Rio Grande, from its mouth until it intersected the southern boundary of New Mexico, thence west and south along the boundaries of that state until they intersected the first branch of the Rio Gila,

thence along that river to its junction with the Colorado, and along the Colorado and the Gulf of California to the Pacific. For this extension of boundary, by which the United States were to acquire, besides the undisputed title to the State of Texas, the territories of New Mexico and Upper and Lower California, Mexico was to receive a sum to be agreed upon between the commissioners. There were many minor stipulations in the projet; and, besides, it was required of Mexico that she should yield the right of way across the Isthmus of Tehuantepec, under certain guarantees and restrictions.\*

By the instructions agreed upon in the Mexican council of ministers on the 30th of August, their commissioners were not permitted to accede to any one of these demands or terms. Many things were to be urged upon the American commissioner, of abstract rather than substantive nature. Among them were the avowal of the motives of the United States in carrying on the war; and the question whether their pretensions to the territory of Mexico were founded in right of force or purely in friendly negotiations; and whether the territory of Texas was to remain in possession of the United States by the alleged right of annexation, or of purchase, to be treated of with the Mexican republic.†

\* Mr. Buchanan to Mr. Trist, April 15th, 1847, and *Projet*. Executive Document, No 52, Senate, first Session of the thirtieth Congress, p. 85.

† "Instructions for the government of the Mexican commissioners, agreed upon in council of ministers, August 29th, 1847, in view of the propositions made by the commissioner of the United States." *Diario del Gobierno*.



The answer to each of these, had it been made by the American commissioner in the positive manner in which it was to have been required, would have been of service to Mexico in the continuation of the war, by embroiling the American government in domestic quarrels. Indeed, the same questions had in substance been long previously proposed in the United States by the leaders of the opposition party, and published to the world and to Mexico. In many cases, those statesmen and editors had undertaken to answer them in the manner most beneficial to the enemy, and had founded upon the assumed answers many an argument against the policy of their own government in the existing war. All these had been eagerly seized upon and entertained in Mexico, and now her authorities were modeling their action after that of their friends in the United States.

The cession of territory proposed was almost absolutely forbidden. All which it was permitted to concede was the right to the territory of Texas, and this not to the Rio Bravo as claimed, but only to the Nueces. Moreover, various provisions were to be insisted on, guaranteeing the payment of the debt owed by Mexico to American citizens by the United States, and the final payment of one half the price of public land, as established by the American government, for the territory so ceded. It was forbidden to cede New Mexico or either of the Californias. All which was allowed in that respect was to grant the privilege of establishing a factory

at San Francisco, and that was to be paid for. The right of way across the Isthmus of Tehuantepec was to be denied, and no privileges were to be allowed to American commerce in the way of exemption from duties.

The three final articles of the instructions directed the commissioners to demand the evacuation of the Mexican territory upon the signature of the preliminaries, and before the ratification of the treaty; the guarantee of the United States for the delivery of Mexican fortresses in an uninjured condition, and with full armament, and the payment of indemnity for the losses of Mexican citizens and the expenses of the war.\*

If the Mexican president really expected to gain all which his commissioners were instructed to demand, certainly he must have considered himself, as he said, "as free as if he had just gained a distinguished victory."† It is hardly possible that he did expect that such preliminaries would be agreed upon in the face of the projet presented by Mr. Trist, and which he must have seen contained the instructions of the American government to that functionary. The care taken that he should not be committed in full even to such propositions, would induce the belief that at this time Santa Anna had come to the conclusion that the violent

\* "Instructions for the government of the Mexican commissioners, agreed upon in council of ministers, August 29th, 1847, in view of the propositions made by the commissioner of the United States." *Diario del Gobierno*.

† Santa Anna's Manifesto, August 23d. Executive Document, No. 65, Senate, first Session of the thirtieth Congress, p. 542.

opposition to the negotiation of a treaty rendered it unsafe for him to conclude it, and that, giving up all idea of it, he was already settling his plan of operations for the renewal of hostilities. So long as the negotiations continued, provided the hostility to them could be kept within such limits as not to compromise his security in power, the advantages were on the Mexican side. Time for preparation was allowed by their continuance, and the "respectable body of troops" at the disposal of the president could be increased to such number as was possible from the population of the city.

In the commission which conferred the powers of negotiation upon the commissioners was introduced a proviso that their agreement should remain subject to constitutional approbation and ratification, and strict adherence to the letter of the instructions was enjoined. But under these instructions and with such powers the members of the commission refused to act, as they stated that it was perfectly impossible to negotiate under them, and "that they would assemble without the capacity properly to execute them."

It was promised, in reply, that the instructions should be enlarged in their import as far as possible; but whether they were immediately modified does not appear from the Mexican official publications.\*

\* Commission. Pacheco to Herrera. Herrera, Conto Mora, and Atristain to Pacheco, and Pacheco in reply, August 30th and 31st, 1847. *Diario del Gobierno*.



The conferences between the commissioners were resumed on the 1st of August, and continued throughout that day and the 2d. The discussion was upon the points contained in the projet presented by Mr. Trist, and he made several concessions in modification of the demands of the United States. He at first abandoned the claim to Lower California, as his instructions did not make it imperative for him to insist upon it. The Mexican commissioners immediately seized upon the concession, and stipulated for such portion of Upper California as would give them free communication around the head of the Gulf of California. This was also conditionally conceded. The territory of New Mexico was insisted on by Mr. Trist as a *sine qua non*, and the Mexican commissioners for a long time held out against it. Finally, however, they agreed to submit the question to their government.

The main point of difference was the possession of the country between the Rio Grande and the Nueces. "If," said one of the Mexican commissioners, "we are to succeed in accomplishing a peace, herein does it lie," pointing at the time to the space included between the rivers on the map. Mr. Trist had, however, gone to the full extent of his powers, and somewhat beyond, when he abandoned the claim to a portion of Upper California, and could go no further. However, he took the responsibility of offering to refer the question of that country between the Nueces and the Rio Grande to his government. The answer, he be-

lieved, could be received from Washington in forty or forty-five days, and he had some hope of its being favorable. With this offer the conference of the 2d of September ended.\*

Even with these concessions, and the offer on the part of the American commissioner to refer the question of the country between the Nueces and the Rio Grande to Washington, which was, in fact, an admission, on his part at least, that the original dispute between the two countries had been on a doubtful point of right on the part of the United States, the terms were not acceptable to the Mexican commissioners, and much less to their government.

Señor Pacheco addressed a note of instruction to General Herrera on the 5th of September, in which the treaty and its terms were discussed at length. It was positively stated that Mexico would neither cede any part of New Mexico, nor yield her right to the territory lying between the Nueces and the Rio Grande; neither would she agree to prolong the armistice for forty-five days, until communications could be exchanged with Washington.†

Having received this paper, the commissioners appointed a meeting with Mr. Trist on the following day, and proceeded to draw up a counter projet, and a letter of reasons with which to present him. Both papers embodied the ultimata of Mexico, al-

\* Mexican Commissioners' Report, and Mr. Trist to Mr. Buchanan, September 4th, 1847. Executive Document, No 52, Senate, first Session of the thirtieth Congress, p. 195.

† Diario del Gobierno.

though it is doubtful whether these were intended to be ratified, even if agreed upon as preliminaries.\* Certainly they never could have been ratified by the United States, if they were by Mexico; and inasmuch as they were drawn up under superintendence of the cabinet, and an answer was requested to the propositions set forth and discussed within three days, it would appear that it was only wished to gain that length of time before the recommencement of hostilities.

During the period from the conclusion of the convention until the 5th of September, the American general-in-chief had entertained hopes that the negotiations which were pending would result in the conclusion and ratification of a treaty. In the mean time, various personages attached to the British embassy were frequent visitors at Tacubaya. These "intelligent neutrals" attributed the various inconsistencies apparent in the conduct of the Mexican president, which, unexplained, must have gone far toward raising distrust of his good faith in the mind of General Scott, to the peculiar nature of Mexican politics and the difficulties by which Santa Anna was surrounded. They knew his intentions as well as, if not better than, any one of the Mexican statesmen or authorities; at least they professed to, and their representations had more effect with General Scott than the opinions of many officers of rank, or the general feeling of the American army; and this, notwithstanding

\* *Diario del Gobierno.*



that the latter were supported by the character of Mexican action, exemplified by the whole history of the country from the date of its independence.

In the American army the conclusion of the armistice had occasioned feelings of profound regret in nearly all classes. Many there were, indeed, who wished to enter the capital of the enemy from motives of gain, or of animosity, or because of the glory which must be attached to its occupation by the victorious army. Those of this class, who were without prudence, desired nothing better than the rupture of the armistice and the speedy recommencement of hostilities.

The same desire was manifested by persons of another class, who had entirely different reasons for entertaining it. They had no faith in the promises of the Mexican president or the representations of British functionaries, and had a fear lest the negotiations would ultimately prove to be of no avail. Although they desired that peace should be concluded, and were willing for the continuation of the armistice so long as the enemy manifested good faith, yet, as no guarantee had been demanded or obtained, they believed that the less reliance placed upon his faith or sense, to the delay of military operations, the better.

The attack on the American train by the leperos, and the tardy and apparently unwilling action of the Mexican authorities, were considered as indicative of the failure of the business. When reports,

authenticated by the observation of persons attached to the army, who, on one business or another, had obtained ingress and egress to and from the city, of the raising of fortifications, and of the arrival and organization of troops, were received, the opinion was confirmed. They were anxious that hostilities should be resumed on the instant, lest the fortifications of the city should be made so strong that its capture would be exceedingly difficult, if not impracticable.

To neither of these two classes did the general-in-chief belong, although he had more personally at stake than any of the first, and fuller information, and more ample data for his opinion, than any of the second. His first great object was to gain the peace. It was believed that the magnanimity displayed in abstaining from an entrance into the capital would be more than an offset to the sacrifice of military glory in the pervading desire of the American people for the termination of the war. The course of action having been once commenced, it became necessary to pursue it so long as any hope remained of a successful issue. If it were unsuccessful, the agreement to the armistice and the opening of negotiations were disastrous occurrences, not only to the authors, but to the whole army. Important as they were, they would not fail to cast as deep a shade over the reputations of the general and commissioner, as the brilliancy which would, for reason of their *magnanimity*, have attached to them in case of success.

Of the various demonstrations of opposition on the part of Mexican authorities other than those immediately connected with the administration, General Scott was fully informed; yet neither these, nor the information that, at a council of general officers, the question of breaking the armistice and attacking one of the American divisions was seriously discussed, shook his confidence in the good faith of Santa Anna. The information was, however, considered so reliable, that he was induced to cause a circular, communicating it, to be sent to his division commanders. This bore date on the 31st of August.\* Finally, early on the 6th of September he learned that on the previous evening the propositions of Mr. Trist had been discussed, not only in the cabinet of ministers, but in the same junta of general officers, and that they had come to the conclusion that the terms were dishonorable and inadmissible.

This information first induced him to believe that the negotiations would result in a total failure, and that he would be obliged to refight the battle under many and accumulated disadvantages. The full weight of the responsibility of making the armistice became apparent in the shade of doubt which rested upon the issue of the conflict. The idea that those who had, for different reasons, considered the conclusion of the convention as ill advised, as it had resulted disastrously, would re-

\* Circular Letter. H. L. Scott, Acting Assistant Adjutant General, to General Pillow. See Appendix, No. 3.



mind the American people that the result had been foreseen, and that General Scott had been advised of it, was forcibly presented.

In fact, the principal apprehension expressed by the general-in-chief was, that those who had differed with him, as he said, without any foundation for their own opinion other than their own desires, or a desire to be found in opposition to every thing which failed, should, now that the negotiation had failed, remind him, "I told you so," notwithstanding the asserted wise policy and weighty reasons which had induced him to concur in it. These persons he denominated "*wiseacres and asses*;" and, truly, he had some reason for apprehension, for the bare and naked fact presented was, that, with only a tithe of the information possessed by the general-in-chief, they long before had arrived at the true conclusion, and had, from the first, believed that the negotiation would result in nothing, except in placing the victory in the hazard of battle, and that hazard greater than any which had been experienced. This, just then, was apparent to the general-in-chief, but it was not until he was informed of the final decision of the military leaders of the enemy. The decision was manifestly proof positive that they, at least, were at the time willing for battle, and believed that Mexico had some chance for success.

With the prospect of any good resultant to the convention faded all prospect of credit or glory to its authors or advisers. That which, under the

name of magnanimity, had been hoped would increase the reputation of the chief participant in granting it, by showing the sacrifice of "the *eclat* which would have followed an immediate entrance, sword in hand, into a great capital,"\* to patriotism—to the great want and wish of the American people, peace, now was presented in its true colors, what it really was—a sacrifice of the results of victory to the desire of popularity, on the desperate chance of any thing like reason or good faith guiding the Mexican president or his advisers. The whole course of the Mexican war had shown that one great element of failure in bringing about a negotiation had been the small numerical force of the American army, and the apparently desperate chance of its ultimate success. It had been believed, until the 6th of September, that the desired peace could be obtained by a sacrifice of all the fruits of the victories of Contreras and Churubusco, and the embarrassment of the small American army in more and stronger difficulties than any in which it had been placed hitherto.

The event had come, and the belief had proved to be a delusion. As distrust had been induced of the good faith of the enemy upon the main point, it was doubted upon all others. It was, to a degree, deemed imprudent for Mr. Trist to attend the conference appointed for the 6th, for it was feared, and perhaps not without reason, that he might be seized

\* General Scott's Report. Executive Document, No. 1, House of Representatives, first Session of the thirtieth Congress, p. 314.

and detained a prisoner. However, nothing of the kind was attempted.

The interview was merely to the end of the presentation by the Mexican commissioners of the counter projet and paper, which had been drawn up with the concurrence of the cabinet of ministers, and has been heretofore noticed. Without taking the three days to consider upon the counter projet, which were allowed upon the face of it, Mr. Trist offered to answer on the following day, broke up the commission, and the negotiations were ended.\*

It is doubtful whether any other result could have been obtained under the circumstances attending the attempt to negotiate. But the course taken by Mr. Trist, under his instructions from Mr. Buchanan, can hardly be deemed well calculated if he were to gain any thing by the discussion. It would seem that in such case he either should have had more power to concede, or should have demanded more, and not come at once so near the ultimata as to present the projet of the treaty at once to the Mexican government, and allow it three days to consider on its terms. Had it been intended to rest the hope of peace upon the military operations, such a course would have been the one to adopt, as it would save time. In that case, the failure to report at the expiration of the time allowed for consideration, or the refusal of the terms, would have been the signal for the resump-

\* Mr. Trist to Mr. Buchanan, September 27th, 1847. Executive Document, No. 52, Senate, first Session of the thirtieth Congress, p. 201.



tion of hostilities. Such a course was probably the one intended by Mr. Buchanan to be followed when he instructed Mr. Trist in relation to it. But as the circumstances of the negotiations at the house of Alfaro were very different from any which were anticipated at Washington, it is impossible to say what course would have been prescribed. Certainly that followed by Mr. Trist was not approved.

The proposition to prolong the armistice for forty-five days, until communications could be exchanged with Washington, demonstrated Mr. Trist's profound ignorance of the military condition of the American army, or his utter disregard for its safety. Scattered in unhealthy villages near the city of Mexico, dependent upon the good faith of the Mexicans for all of the conveniences and many of the necessities of life, with a large hospital of wounded, and a daily and fearfully increasing sick report, and without the possibility of re-enforcement, at the end of forty-five days it would hardly have been in a fit condition for active operations. Certainly not against strong positions defended by an enemy who had free communication with the interior of his country, whose losses in men could be easily recruited from the population of the city or country, and who was only restrained from increasing his numbers and defenses by the stipulations of a military convention. All history told that the Mexicans scrupled not in the violation of treaty or word of honor to serve their own interests. It

could hardly have been in reason expected that they would have been restrained by such a barrier for the term of forty-five days, when so strong inducements for breaking it were presented in the perilous position of the American army.

Mr. Trist's asserted reasons for making the proposition are, that he wished to commit Santa Anna and his party to the measure of ceding a portion of the territory of Mexico, and that the army would be in better situation to attack Mexico at the end of October than the 1st of September, inasmuch as the weather would have been more favorable, and it would have been increased in numbers by the recovery of the sick and wounded.\* How long Santa Anna would have remained committed had he once been committed, if his interest advised his disavowal of the policy, may well be questioned. It would be difficult to find many officers of the army who would agree with Mr. Trist in regard to his second reason; and, moreover, it is said by the same person, that, under the circumstances, Santa Anna allowed his hopes to flatter him that the next conflict would prove favorable to the Mexican arms, and that he feared that the American army would derive some advantage from the prolongation of the armistice.† If such were the case, certainly he must have been ready for the conflict, and future events go still further to support such a belief.

\* Mr. Trist to Mr. Buchanan, December 6th, 1847. Executive Document, No. 52, Senate, first Session of the thirtieth Congress, p. 258.

† Idem.

The final termination of the negotiation caused more implicit reliance to be placed upon the reports which had been made of the repair and erection of fortifications by the Mexican army. In the disappointment was found cause for indignation against Santa Anna which all his previous suspicious acts had failed to arouse. In a note addressed to him immediately after Mr. Trist's return from the conference, General Scott enumerated the various infractions of the convention, and declared his right to terminate it, without any regard to the forty-eight hours' notice which had been stipulated for in the second article. He had received informal petitions from the city of Mexico, through the neutrals, to allow time for the departure of the unarmed inhabitants. He granted until twelve o'clock on the following day for that purpose, although in his note to Santa Anna he stated that such time was allowed for possible explanation, apology, and reparation, failing in which, the armistice was concluded at that hour.\*

Santa Anna replied on the following day, and in recrimination instead of apology. The infractions of the convention and the erection of batteries were charged upon General Scott, as well as the permission of a continued course of outrageous conduct on the part of his troops in the different villages in which they were quartered. All of these were notoriously false; but Santa Anna had taken his

\* Executive Document, No. 1, House of Representatives, first Session of the thirtieth Congress, p. 359.



final stand, and put them forth with the unblushing effrontery which might have been expected in a man who had just duped his adversary, by a continued course of diplomatic intrigue, into two weeks' delay, which enabled him to present strong fortifications and a bold front to the invaders. In conclusion, the Mexican president stated that it was his belief that General Scott's threat of the immediate resumption of hostilities was truly caused by his refusal to sign the treaty (in which belief he was doubtless correct), and intimated that he should repel force by force with the decision and energy which his high obligations imposed upon him.\*

During the continuance of the armistice, the American staff had been employed, under General Scott's direction, in refitting as far as possible, and preparing stores of subsistence, in anticipation of the possible failure of the negotiation. Of subsistence, the commissary's department had been enabled to obtain from the city and the country in the vicinity rations for twenty days in advance. The quarter-master's department was successful in refitting to some extent, but could obtain only a scant supply of forage, and that of unsuitable quality. The pay department, as well as the other fiscal branches of the staff, had been supplied with money by the negotiation of drafts on the United States in the capital, and so far as the wants of the army

\* Executive Document, No. 1, House of Representatives, first Session of the thirtieth Congress, p. 360.

could be by funds, they were supplied; but from the delays and difficulties which had been presented to the passage of the army agents to and from the city toward the close of the armistice, the supply of money on hand, like that of subsistence, was limited. The ordnance department had repaired all the damages which the artillery and other armament of the American army had sustained, besides refitting several of the captured Mexican guns, and replenishing the ammunition of the light batteries from that of the enemy. So far as armament was concerned, nothing could have been desired by the Americans. The whole number of cannon of all calibers, including the light batteries and mountain howitzers, was sixty-eight. Of these, a large proportion were of heavy metal, and all formed a train quite as large as the army, reduced as it was by at least two thousand men through the casualties of Contreras and Churubusco, and the increase of the sick list, could handle. When negotiations were broken off, General Scott had under his command not more than 8500 effectives of all arms.

The discipline of the troops, always more or less injured by a campaign of active service, had been as well attended to as the duties of refitting and repairing would allow. The positions occupied were not, however, very favorable for the practice of extended military evolutions.

There had occurred but few crimes of a strictly military nature which required punishment or cor-

rection. The number of those of a moral kind was comparatively small, notwithstanding the repeated complaints of the Mexican authorities, and the asseverations of the Mexican president.

When it is remembered that the American army had been stopped short in its career of victory, and placed in a situation of comparative idleness, it is to be wondered at that there were no more. To such as did occur, the corrective was applied through the military commissions.

The most important duty assigned to courts-martial was the trial of the prisoners of the battalion of San Patricio. Without exception, these were deserters from the American army, and the whole number, sixty-nine, were put upon trial. During the continuance of the armistice, most of them were found guilty and sentenced. Those who had deserted during the war were sentenced to death; but all those who had deserted before the actual commencement of hostilities received only corporeal punishment and military imprisonment. To that extent only the laws of the United States allowed the courts to proceed when the crime was committed in time of peace. Although the sentences were passed, yet the general-in-chief disliked the duty of ordering their execution. There is but little doubt that, had the negotiations accomplished the object of the war, which would have permitted the exercise of mercy without immediate danger to the discipline of his army, he would gladly have availed himself of the opportunity to extend it; but as



negotiation had not succeeded, and to have done so would have been to offer immunity to desertion to the enemy, such could not have failed to be dangerous. Undoubtedly those not too well attached to their colors, and those at all influenced by fear, of which classes there are always some in every army, would have deserted to escape the danger of the approaching conflicts. The morale of the enemy would have been increased, however small the loss might have been to the American army. It followed that, during the operations which ensued, the execution of the sentences was ordered, and the deserters suffered their penalty.

So obvious a measure of justice, and so ordinary a proceeding as the execution of deserters, would hardly have excited so much remark as did this case, had it not been the first instance of the kind during the Mexican war. Whenever deserters had previously fallen into custody, they had either been awarded comparatively slight punishments, or had been driven in disgrace from the camp of their former comrades. Being the first, this execution excited some considerable attention, but no regret or distrust of its justice with Americans. Mexicans, however, failed not to characterize it as barbarous and unjust in the extreme, as indeed it might have been expected they would, in their usual perversion of all things to the support of their own side of any question.

## CHAPTER XI.

General Scott's Information concerning a Mexican Foundry—His Resolution to destroy it—Orders to General Worth—Order preparatory to a final Attack upon the City of Mexico—Position and Defenses of Molino del Rey—Information, Opinions, and Orders concerning Attack—BATTLE OF MOLINO DEL REY—Immediate Effect upon American Army—Upon Mexicans—Reconnaissance of 8th of September.

ACTING in strict good faith with the spirit of the convention, General Scott ordered no reconnaissances or other measures of hostility until the expiration of the term allowed by his note of September 6th. As nothing of the kind had been attempted during the continuance of the armistice, no information of the state or position of the Mexican defenses had been gained from actual observation by officers. In that respect the American army was in no better condition than when the convention had first been concluded, more than two weeks previously.

On the night of the 6th of September two persons came out of the city to General Scott, and informed him that many bells had been dismounted from the steeples of the churches within the two or three days then last past. This information, connected with that of other persons who had approached near to the Molino del Rey (a position within a mile of Tacubaya, and under the fire of the heavy guns of the Castle of Chapultepec), that

they had heard the operation of boring cannon, induced the belief that a foundery, represented to be in the position, was in active operation.\* As General Scott desired time, notwithstanding his threatened speedy renewal of hostilities, in order to determine fully his plan for a final attack upon the city, he conceived that it would be a measure of good policy to break up the machinery and put a stop to the manufacture of cannon, for it was feared that the losses which the Mexicans had sustained in the battles of Contreras and Churubusco would be repaired.† How well founded this belief was will be seen in the sequel.

About twelve o'clock on the 7th the general-in-chief reconnoitered the position from the roof of the bishop's palace in Tacubaya. He could not from that distance discover any strong or important defenses, although large corps of troops were seen taking up position near the supposed foundery. It was thought practicable to penetrate into Molino del Rey, and obtain the desired object without great loss.

General Worth was charged with the execution of the duty, and ordered to hold himself in readiness to attack and carry the position during the night, to break up the machinery and any guns which he might find, and retire before daybreak into his quarters at Tacubaya.

\* General Scott's Testimony before the Court of Inquiry. Executive Document, No. 65, Senate, first Session of the thirtieth Congress, p. 298.

† General Scott's Report. Executive Document, No. 1, House of Representatives, first Session of the thirtieth Congress, p. 355.



While the observation was taking place and the orders being delivered, Captain Mason, of the engineers, was sent to make a closer reconnaissance, the results of which gave a fuller knowledge of the Mexican positions.

The range of strong stone buildings, known as Molino del Rey, nearly one mile north of the village of Tacubaya, forms the western side of an inclosure which surrounds the rock and castle, groves, and fields of Chapultepec. The rock and castle are nearly due east from the Molino, and distant about eleven hundred yards. The guns of the castle command the position, and also the ground for some distance on the west, although the height of the rock is so great that the fire at even the distance of the Molino is quite plunging, and the sight from the castle is partially obstructed by the foliage of the groves. Of the ground to the west and beyond it, the view is clear and uninterrupted.

The range of buildings is some five hundred yards long, of an oblong outline, constructed of massive stone, and within has various subdivisions and yards. But two principal entrances to the inclosures are presented to the exterior. One of them, on the south, toward Tacubaya, is a gateway of considerable dimensions; the other, on the western side, near the northwestern houses, is of smaller size. Besides these two, a few narrow doorways and windows open in those directions.

This point was occupied by a strong corps of troops, of the national guards of Queretaro, Puebla,

and Oajaca, under General Leon. The doors, windows, and gateways were strongly barricaded, the walls were in some places creneled for musketry, and the azoteas were surrounded by sand-bag parapets.

Nearly west of the northern side of Molino del Rey, distant about five hundred yards, was the Casa Mata, a strong stone building, creneled and parapeted like the former, and surrounded by a quadrangular bastioned field-work. This position was occupied by the troops of the line under General Perez.

Upon these two points rested the right and left of the Mexican line. Between them, near the northwestern angle of Molino del Rey, was planted a battery of four guns. In rear of the intervals between the artillery and the flanks extended a continued line of infantry, posted behind ditches, embankments, and clusters of maguey, and among some adobe houses in the vicinity.

On the west of the Casa Mata, at a distance of some three hundred yards, a ravine, of considerable depth and width, and of exceeding difficulty, except at a point where it was crossed by a roadway, under fire of Casa Mata, extended northeast and southwest. The roadway led to the hacienda Morales, distant some eighteen hundred yards from Casa Mata. About the hacienda was stationed Alvarez's corps of Pintos.

The general direction of the Mexican line, it will be seen, was northwest and southeast, having Casa

Mata and Molino del Rey as points of rest for its wings, and Alvarez's corps in readiness to threaten a movement on the flank of an enemy in case of an attack. The garrison of Molino del Rey had a free communication with Chapultepec through two openings into the inclosure which surrounded that position. The other portions of the line could communicate with Chapultepec and the city by the road which ran along the north, by the side of the aqueduct which formed that side of the surrounding walls.

In rear of the Mexican line extended large fields of luxuriant Indian corn, which could serve to screen any reserve force which might there be posted.

The approach to the positions was by a road leading from Tacubaya, over ground somewhat rough and broken, through maguey hedges and embankments, direct upon the southern side of Molino del Rey. The inequalities of the ground and the vegetation might screen an advance until it had approached within one hundred yards of the Molino.

All the ground in front of the lines was perfectly practicable for many hundred yards. The most distant was of cultivated fields, but the approach thence to the Mexican position was over ground gently inclined, and perfectly clear until it reached the maguey, which partially hid the Mexican defenses and troops from view.

Santa Anna commenced occupying these posi-



tions on the morning of the 7th. It is a somewhat remarkable fact, that at the very time the American general was ordering what he believed to be a partial operation for breaking up a foundry, the Mexican president was taking up position with his main force to oppose him. This would lead to the belief that Santa Anna had information of General Scott's intention, and of the fact of his belief in the existence of the foundry, if, indeed, the skillful intriguer had not connived his receiving the information which induced the belief.

Captain Mason discovered the general character of the defenses and positions, and the locality of the battery. His report satisfied Worth that the undertaking would result in something more than a mere skirmish, and he ordered a second reconnaissance. It resulted in the verification and increase of the former information of the strength of the point to be attacked.

On the afternoon of the 7th General Scott issued an order, approximating the corps of the army, preparatory to a general attack by different routes (as it was said) upon the capital.\* The general hospital and depôt were to be established at Mixcoac. At that point Twiggs and Quitman were to be concentrated on the following day. Twiggs was directed to advance one brigade to the vicinity of the city, by the Niño Perdido road, at six o'clock on the evening of the 7th. That movement, it was expected, would threaten an attack on the southern

\* General Orders, No. 279. See Appendix, No. 4.

front. Pillow was directed also to advance to the position of the hacienda San Borja with one brigade, and to take command of the advanced posts thus held by the troops of his own and of Twiggs's division, which were to communicate freely. The second brigade of this division he was to send to Tacubaya, to be in readiness to support Worth's attack, should it be necessary.

Pillow advanced to San Borja with the ninth regiment of Pierce's brigade, the twelfth being left to form part of the garrison of Mixcoac. The fifteenth had been for some time in occupation of the hacienda. Cadwalader's brigade marched to Tacubaya during the evening, and Riley's, of Twiggs's division, moved down as ordered, and took post in the hacienda Nalvarte.

During the afternoon Pillow reconnoitered in person as far as Piedad, and obtained some information of the localities on the southern front. At evening he learned from a person worthy of credence, and who had his information from the foreman of the foundry which had been in operation at Molino del Rey, that it was no longer in existence, and that the machinery had been removed to the city some weeks previously; and, further, that if it were, the water power by which the machinery had been moved was derived from a stream brought in a sluice down the inclination from the hills above Tacubaya through Molino del Rey. This water could easily be turned from its course, and once turned, the machinery was of course stopped,

and the direct object of the intended attack was effected. This information was communicated to General Scott during the evening.

But, having made his arrangements and issued his orders for the attack, the general-in-chief was resolved that it should proceed, notwithstanding the contradictory information which he had received from other persons, foreigners, in Tacubaya, as well as from General Pillow. He had allowed Worth to make use of two twenty-four pounders for the purpose of cannonading the Castle of Chapultepec during the attack. With these, and three light pieces in addition to his artillery, and the vicinity of Cadwalader's brigade, it was not deemed that there was any chance of failure, or possibility of serious action. He expressed the belief that the attack would be made, the duty accomplished, and that Worth's troops, with the loss of no more than twenty men, would be back in their quarters at the dawn of day. In such case, if the foundery were there, it would be destroyed; and if not there, he would know it, and at small cost. With a reply to his information to the above effect, Pillow returned from the head-quarters to his position at San Borja.

Meanwhile Worth was preparing for the battle. As the reports of the reconnaissances had convinced him that it would be strongly contested, while he prepared to fight it he took the responsibility of making two principal modifications in the orders verbally given by General Scott. The first of these



was in the time at which the attack was to take place. As the ground beyond the first points in the Mexican line was not known, the entanglement of a corps in a long range of buildings, in the dark, in search of a foundery whose locality was only guessed at, was very reasonably deemed to be an undertaking of some hazard. Worth ordered that the attack should take place at dawn of day.

The second modification was in the end to be gained as the result of the attack, and the reason for the modification is to be found in the different view which Worth entertained of the matter from that of General Scott. He believed that he was going to fight a battle, and he wished something tangible as the fruit of it. He believed the Castle of Chapultepec was of great importance, and as it lay near the proposed field of battle, he wished to extend operations to include its capture. His order was accordingly issued to the effect that the commanders should make dispositions for the assault so soon as the enemy had been routed from the positions of his line at Molino del Rey.

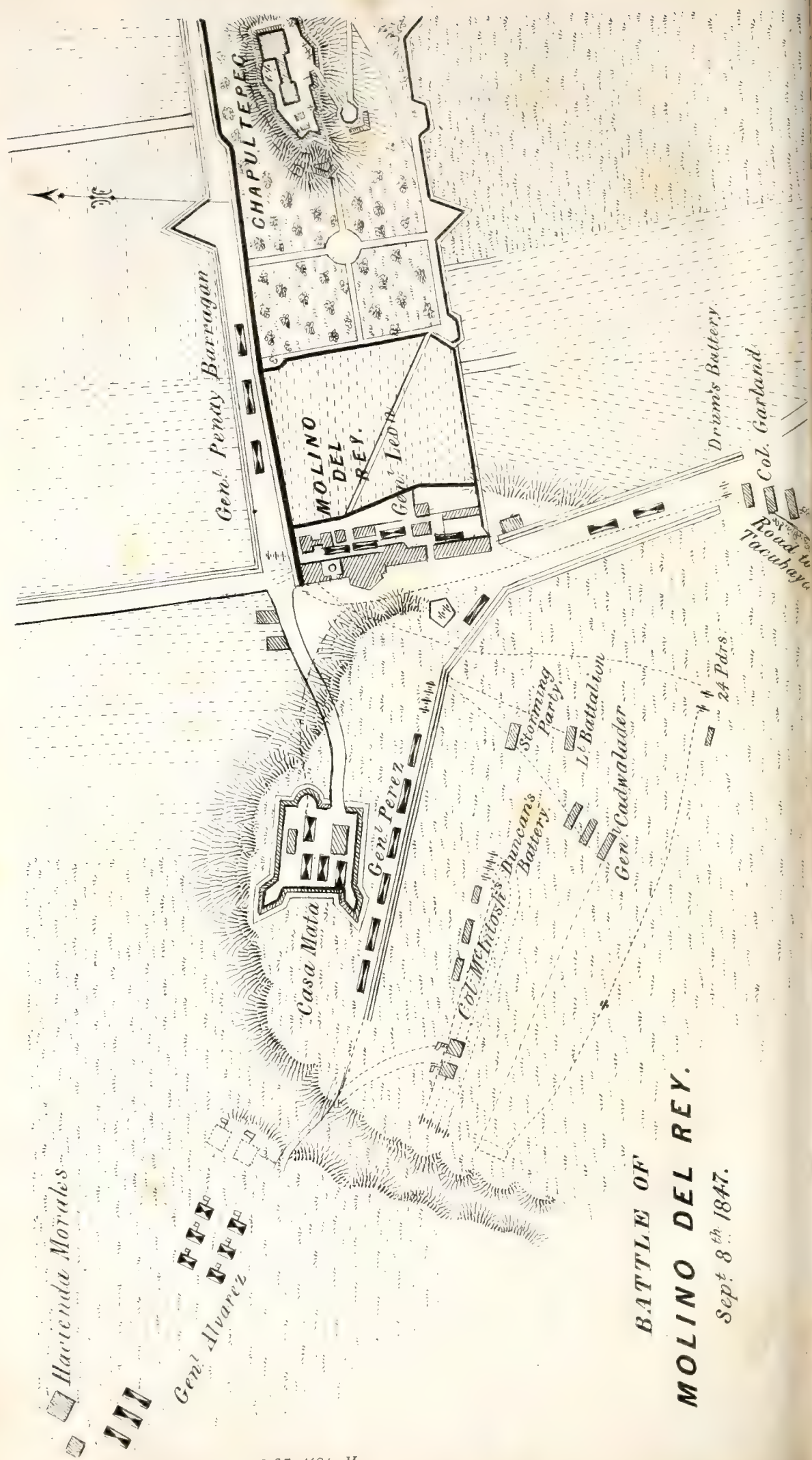
As Scott believed that the affair would be but a skirmish, and, as he contemplated making the final attack on the south front of the city, that Chapultepec would be of no great importance in ulterior operations, he thought that to attempt the assault would induce a greater battle than he wished to fight at the time. He would not think of an advance beyond Molino del Rey, and sent to Worth to modify his order.

General Cadwalader and Colonel Duncan came down from Worth's head-quarters to confer with him upon the subject ; but as to the assault on Chapultepec, Scott was inflexible. He permitted the change in the time, but he directed the two officers to return to General Worth, and give him his positive order that he should on no account advance beyond Molino del Rey ; that he should effect the capture of that point, break up the machinery, and at once retire into Tacubaya. And Worth modified his order accordingly.

The dispositions for the attack contemplated a vigorous assault on the center of the Mexican positions, to be supported and followed by attacks on either flank. Garland's brigade and two pieces of light artillery, under Captain Drum, were ordered to advance by the road from Tacubaya upon Molino del Rey, and to cut off any support from Chapultepec. Upon his left, within distance which allowed those forces to support, if necessary, were to be posted two twenty-four pounders under Captain Huger, immediately supported by the light battalion. In front of the Mexican center, opposite to the position where the battery had been observed, a select party of five hundred, under Major Wright of the 8th infantry, was to take position for storming it. The second brigade, under Lieutenant-colonel M'Intosh, and Duncan's battery, were ordered to form further to the left, in front of Casa Mata. On the extreme left were to be posted three squadrons and a troop of horse, under Major Sumner.







# **BATTLE OF MOLINO DEL REY.**

*Sept 8<sup>th</sup> 1847.*

Cadwalader's brigade was to form in rear of the center, in reserve. As Tacubaya was to be left without garrison during the battle, the pickets on the road leading thence past Chapultepec to the city were strengthened by infantry and a piece of artillery.\*

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At three o'clock on the morning of the 8th of September, the different corps of Worth's command got in motion for their designated positions. They were occupied in silence and without interruption from the enemy. While yet dark, the twenty-four pounders opened upon Molino del Rey, and their loud reports, and the crashing of the shot as they tore through the masonry, alone disturbed the silence. Captain Mason, who was to lead Wright's party, accompanied by Lieutenant Foster, proceeded in advance to assure himself in his position. Having found certain marks, observed the day before, he sent his subaltern to inform the commanding officer, and show the route of advance; but so silent was the whole Mexican line, that it was a question of doubt with him whether the enemy had not evacuated his lines, for he was within a few hundred yards of positions which had been occupied on the previous day.

Wright promptly advanced his party in line in the direction indicated. Upon nearing the enemy's position, all doubts as to the resistance to be en-

\* General Worth's Report. Executive Document, No. 1, House of Representatives, first Session of the thirtieth Congress, p. 362.

countered were dispelled at once. The battery, whose location had been changed during the night, opened heavily upon the flank of the party with round and grape, cutting down officers and men in fearful rapidity. The charge was ordered, and the noble soldiers, bringing down their muskets, rushed straight at the battery. Notwithstanding the storm of grape and musketry with which they were greeted, they drove the enemy from his guns, and strove to make good the battle against overwhelming odds; but the infantry of the Mexican lines, and on the azoteas of Molino del Rey, kept up such a continuous and rapid fire, that it was impossible to continue the fight in any kind of formation.

Of the fourteen officers who went into action with the command, eleven soon fell, dead or disabled, and with them a large number of the rank and file. In scattered parties those unhurt kept up a fire, but the command as a body was broken, and fell away from the battery. The Mexican infantry soldiers rushed forward and reoccupied it. They murdered every wounded man left on the ground except Captain Walker of the sixth infantry and one private, both desperately wounded, and both doubtless believed to be dead.

At this time Worth ordered forward three companies of the light battalion (one being left to support the heavy guns), and battalions of the eleventh and fourteenth regiments of Cadwalader's brigade. All three of these corps rapidly entered into the conflict.



The light battalion rushed on through the remnants of the storming party, and the Mexicans, being by this time attacked on the flank by Garland's brigade, gave way before its vigorous assault. One company took post under shelter of a low bank, and commenced a warm fire against the enemy on the azoteas of Molino del Rey. Two more were led by Captain E. K. Smith toward the enemy's left, where they joined the troops of the first brigade, just then making ground in the action.

The battalions of the eleventh and fourteenth followed their lieutenant colonels, Graham and Hébert, and, coming under fire, commenced a rapid discharge against the enemy in and around Molino del Rey, and in the fields to its right.

The position in which all these troops were engaged was in the re-entering angle of the Mexican line, and they were exposed to a cross fire which cut them up severely, and rendered concert of action impossible; but in scattered parties they held their ground, and mingled with the troops of Garland's brigade, then coming gallantly forward, and all fought with desperate valor.

When the fire first opened upon the storming party, and developed the immense disparity of force with which it was engaged, Garland ordered his brigade forward to support its attack.\* Upon

\* Colonel Garland's Report. Executive Document, No. 1, House of Representatives, first Session of the thirtieth Congress, Appendix to the Report of the Secretary of War, p. 137.

nearing the southern extremity of Molino del Rey, the command received a heavy and destructive fire from the azoteas of the buildings as well as from the Mexican battery, for it had been reoccupied, and two guns turned upon the new attack. Drum's pieces were at once brought into action, and, the horses being disabled, were run forward by hand to an enfilading position within one hundred yards of the opposing battery. Seconded by the close fire of a portion of the infantry, they soon drove the Mexican gunners and their immediate support from the position, which was at once seized by the troops advancing from the front. At this moment the remnants of the storming party were keeping up a straggling fire, and the light battalion, and the eleventh and fourteenth, were coming forward at a run.

The battery having been seized, in detached parties all the troops on this part of the field became engaged with the Mexican force. A portion of it was outside of Molino del Rey; for, having seen the danger of the capture of the battery, General Leon had led a strong sortie for its protection. He was too late, and his troops were driven back into the Molino. The general was mortally wounded, and, besides, several officers of high rank, and large numbers of soldiers, were wounded and slain.

Still the Mexicans held on to the Molino del Rey with desperate pertinacity. Drum's guns were turned upon the buildings, and parties of infantry from exterior positions strove to drive the enemy

from the azoteas. Others, searching for an entrance, approached close to the walls, regardless of the storm of shot which was showered upon them, to which they replied with all possible effect. In this confused manner the battle on the American right was kept up; but the result was for a time doubtful, and victory hung in the balance, for the operations upon the left had not progressed successfully.

Colonel M'Intosh's brigade and Duncan's battery had advanced to within six hundred yards of the Mexican lines, when the fire first opened upon the storming party. The command was halted, and Duncan, throwing his guns instantly into battery, cannonaded the Mexican troops upon their right. Under his practice they soon ceased the fire in his immediate front, and numbers took shelter in Casa Mata and the surrounding works.

Duncan was then ordered to cease his fire, and M'Intosh to advance his brigade to the assault. The troops moved forward in line to within one hundred yards of the position, when the enemy opened from a low embankment in front of the works, from the works, and from the buildings within. The Americans were then within thirty yards of Casa Mata; but the Mexicans poured such a stream of shot upon them that the advance was checked, and many took such cover as the embankment afforded; but that was little. M'Intosh fell mortally wounded; Lieutenant-colonel Martin Scott, who succeeded him, was shot dead; Major



Waite, the commanding officer of the eighth, was disabled; and, under these circumstances, confusion arose, and concert of action was impossible. The men had fallen almost by platoons and companies in an incredibly short space of time. The configuration of the ground favored the Mexican fire, giving it great effect, when otherwise it would have been aimed too high.

Still the remnants of the brigade held on, and the officers called on their men to advance. But nearly one third of them had fallen, the same proportion of officers had been killed and disabled, and the effort to advance was unavailing. Finally the order was passed for the brigade to fall back and rally on the battery. It was not known from whom the order proceeded; many officers would not obey it, and strove to keep their men in position. Some even persisted in the endeavor to advance; but it was fruitless. A slow and disordered retreat was the consequence, and during it the enemy added greatly to the number of killed and wounded.

So soon as the front of Casa Mata had been cleared, large bodies of Mexican troops advanced from the works, and enacted the same barbarities which had been perpetrated at the battery, by slaying the wounded. Keeping on in force, they threatened to come down upon the flank of the troops engaged about Molino del Rey; but Cadwalader, seeing the movement, changed the front of a battalion of the fourteenth regiment to check it.

While these events were taking place it had become broad day-light, and Colonel Duncan observed a threatening movement on the left. Santa Anna, who was in the vicinity of the field, had ordered Alvarez to move down on the American flank with his whole force, and, with a cloud of cavalry in advance, the Piñto chieftain was coming rapidly on. Duncan took two guns to the left to check him; and as the conflict in front of Casa Mata soon masked the fire, he was followed by the remaining section. The voltigeur regiment marched to support him, and took post in the ravine to oppose its passage. The guns were unlimbered on the southeastern crest, and, so soon as the cavalry approached within easy range, opened fire. Alvarez pulled up at once to a halt and withstood the effect of a few discharges, but then the mass of his troops reeled under them, and fell back out of range. Two companies of voltigeurs crossed the ravine and fell upon a detached retreating party, of which the whole number was destroyed or captured.

Major Sumner meanwhile brought up his dragoons, and moving at a brisk trot to the roadway, regardless of the destructive volleys showered upon his flank from Casa Mata, crossed the ravine and threatened a charge. But before the dragoons had completed their formation, the enemy, who had halted, recommenced his retreat, and retired to the hacienda Morales. A twenty-four pounder, ordered by Worth to the left, came up at the time, and,

opening fire, annoyed the retreat until the enemy had passed its range. The dragoons held their position, covering the left of the American line, until the close of the action.

On the right the battle had continued to rage without positive advantage on either side. Drum's guns (worked at times by officers, for the gunners more than once gave out, being wounded or from fatigue) kept up a fire upon Molino del Rey. Parties of infantry were engaged firing upon the enemy upon the azoteas, and the remainder of the troops were at work in the same confused yet vigorous manner, attempting to force a passage into the building.

A party from the second artillery and fourth infantry attacked the southern gate, and commenced tearing down the hacienda with no other instruments than muskets and bayonets, and such as the soldiers could gather on the ground. Others, of the third artillery, fourth infantry, light battalion, and fragments of the storming column, which had rejoined their colors in the tumult, kept along the western front, firing into the apertures, and climbing to the tops of the walls, wherever sheds or broken masonry presented any thing like facilities. The gate near the northwestern angle was attacked by parties of these troops, mingled with others of the eleventh and fourteenth, while the remainder were engaged with the enemy, who still held position to the left. The loss was heavy in every part; but with determined bravery, such as seldom fails of



ultimate success, men and officers kept vigorously to the fight.

Finally the southern gate was dashed in, and with loud shouts, led on by Major Buchanan, of the fourth infantry, and Captain M'Kenzie, of the second artillery, the assailants entered, and engaged at once in close combat. At first the Mexicans would not yield, and for some time kept up a heavy fire from windows and azoteas upon the Americans in the court-yards below. But these pressed on with undiminished vigor, breaking in doors and windows, entering the houses, and climbing to the roofs of the buildings, and engaged in hand to hand bayonet work.

At nearly the same moment the northwestern gate was forced, and a crowd of gallant men, gallantly led, rushed in, and continued the fight in like manner. Here, too, the enemy made sturdy resistance, and inflicted severe loss upon the assailants. Captain Anderson, of the third artillery, one of the first at the gate, was severely wounded. Captain Ayres, of the same regiment, a gallant officer, who, soon after the gate had been forced, had sprung single-handed into a crowd of more than twenty enemies, and held his ground until supported, finally died under a third wound. Numerous others went down, killed or wounded; but the survivors, no less gallant than those who fell, continued the fight with desperate energy.

At last, those Mexicans not slain or wounded retreated from Molino del Rey toward Chapultepec,

excepting some seven hundred officers and men on the azoteas and in the houses, whence escape was impossible. These hung out white flags in token of surrender. The assailants paused, and Drum, who had been working his guns upon those parts of the range of buildings to which they had not penetrated, ceased firing. Regardless of their own flag, some Mexican soldiers, nevertheless, continued their volleys, which were not checked until the main body of the garrison were clear of Molino del Rey.

At the northern angle of the buildings, around the adobe houses, the battle was still fiercely contested. Parties of the eleventh, fourteenth, and fourth regiments were there led against the enemy. After an obstinate contest, in which Lieutenant-colonel Graham, of the eleventh, who, though with four severe wounds, continued in action, fell dead by a fifth, the position was carried, and the enemy was driven back upon his right.

When Duncan's guns had become unmasked by the retreat of the second brigade, Alvarez having fallen back, his whole battery was turned upon the enemy in and about Casa Mata. Under the rapid and well-directed fire, the position was abandoned, and General Perez commenced a retreat by his right, for his direct communication with Chapultepec had been cut off by the capture of Molino del Rey. The line of retreat kept him still under Duncan's fire, which inflicted upon him a severe loss. The parties of troops which were following up the

success from the right, entered the works and building upon the rear of the retreating forces, capturing thirty-six officers and soldiers. With this the battle about Casa Mata ceased, and that portion of the field was entirely won.

But a strong Mexican force, having been rallied by General Peña y Barragan, advanced along the road north of the inclosure of Chapultepec, with the apparent determination of retaking Molino del Rey. With this column was an eighteen pounder; but before it opened, Lieutenant-colonel Belton, the senior officer near the angle, ordered up Drum's guns, and a captured six pounder, served by Lieutenant Peck and men of the light battalion. These three pieces opened so rapid and well-directed a fire that the Mexican column gave way before it, leaving the eighteen pounder. Parties from the fourth, sixth, and eighth regiments (the two latter of which had come down to the point after having rallied on the left) followed close on the fugitives, and secured the gun. It could not be removed, for the enemy had carried off the limber and spiked it. The carriage was therefore destroyed, and the spike more securely driven.

Soon after, the enemy, having rallied again, advanced up the road, and extended to the right, with the apparent intention of effecting a junction with a portion of the force which had retreated from Casa Mata. This attempt was checked by a rapid fire from the American artillery, which, in the mean time, had been increased by a twenty-four



pounder, and a heavy volley from the infantry. As the enemy gave way the Americans advanced, and followed the pursuit for some six hundred yards along the road.

Inside Molino del Rey some few old molds for cannon were discovered and demolished ; but, saving these, not a vestige of a foundery was to be seen. An attempt was made to fire the buildings ; but they were not combustible, and it was soon given over. Meanwhile, a straggling fire was kept up from the grove of Chapultepec upon such American troops as were upon the tops of the walls ; but the distance was great, and the fire was only annoying. A captured gun, brought forward by Captain Glenn and a party from the fourteenth infantry, was served, through a gateway opening into the inclosure, upon a redan, and a line of Mexican troops along the front of the grove. Before this fire, and that of some pieces fired from the angle over the wall upon the north, the enemy, now demoralized by the result of the battle, gave way, and all resistance from the vicinity of his original position was ended. Parties of soldiers, passing through the Molino, crossed the fields and took post in the grove ; but they were not in force, and the orders forbade their officers to pursue the victory.

From daylight throughout the action, the guns of the Castle of Chapultepec had played incessantly upon the American troops upon the plains west of Molino del Rey. In the latter stages, several were turned upon those in position near the north-

western angle, engaged with the rallied Mexican forces.

General Scott had watched the progress of the battle from a position near Tacubaya, and, while it was at its height, sent an officer to order Pillow to move up from San Borja with Pierce's and Riley's brigades. Before those troops arrived upon the field, Molino del Rey was carried, and the enemy had fallen back through it into the grove of Chapultepec. By General Worth's permission, General Cadwalader again suggested to the general-in-chief the propriety of pursuing the victory and carrying Chapultepec, but he again declined adopting the suggestion.

When General Scott sent his order to Pillow, that officer was already in motion. He had been observing the operations from the hacienda San Borja, and saw that what had been anticipated would be a skirmish had proved to be a hard-fought battle. As the American line gave way in some places and advanced but slowly in others, while the Mexican fire was increasing, and Chapultepec was in constant action, it was feared that, should an order to move up be awaited, time would be lost, which would cause disaster; for Pillow's command was the nearest to the field of the American troops not engaged, and it was at the distance of three miles; wherefore Riley's brigade was ordered up from Nalvarte, and Pillow started at once with Pierce's two regiments and Magruder's battery. When near Tacubaya, he met the order of

the general-in-chief, and, moving rapidly, arrived on the field while the last scenes of the battle were being enacted about the angle of Molino del Rey.

As he passed General Scott's position, he received an order to engage his troops so far as might be necessary to secure the victory, but he was positively forbidden to adventure beyond the positions originally designated as objects of attack. Worth, however, was in the spirit for battle, and seeing the arrival of fresh troops, the thought of seizing Chapultepec while the enemy was broken and dispirited recurred to him. Riding up to Pillow, he requested him to move down to Molino del Rey, to pass through and take position in the grove, in preparation to assault and carry the castle. Under the positive orders of the general-in-chief to the contrary, Pillow refused to comply. The field was won as far as the positions originally designated by General Scott, and there being no immediate use for his troops, Pierce's brigade was formed out of range of Chapultepec, upon the plains. Riley's brigade soon after came up and took position on its right.

Worth's troops proceeded to the task of bringing off their dead and wounded, under the repeated orders of General Scott to fall back to Tacubaya. While the work continued, it was discovered that there was a large store of ammunition in the buildings of Casa Mata, and a number of wagons were sent down to remove it. Several loads were carried off under a fire of shot and shell from Chapul-



tepec, and it was ordered that the remainder should be destroyed. The whole amount left in the buildings was not calculated upon, and its explosion blew up the whole Casa Mata, and destroyed Captain Armstrong and some ten or twelve soldiers within and in its immediate vicinity.

When the killed and wounded had been removed from the American left, Duncan's battery, the dragoons, and the remnant of Worth's second brigade retired from the field. Scattered parties of Alvarez's command advanced from the hacienda Morales near to the further crest of the ravine, but Magruder's pieces were opened upon them, and they soon fell back. Pillow was ordered to send two regiments to the Molino del Rey, to cover the retreat of Garland's and Cadwalader's brigades, which were directed to fall back to Tacubaya. For this duty, General Pierce was sent down with the second and ninth regiments; and although the guns of Chapultepec were served spitefully upon them, the movement was accomplished without loss. Cadwalader's brigade marched first from the position, and was soon followed by Garland's. When all the prisoners had been marched off, and every one of the American dead had been removed, the second and ninth fell back also, and, in obedience to General Scott's orders, Pillow's troops retired from the plains to the west. The battle of Molino del Rey was ended, and the enemy was allowed to occupy the field at his leisure and inclination.

In this, the hardest contested battle of the whole

war, the aggregate of the American troops upon the field, before Pillow's arrival at San Borja, was but 3447.\* That this small force attacked and drove the enemy, at least 10,000 strong (exclusive of Alvarez's forces), from his formidable positions and intrenchments, captured four pieces of artillery and near eight hundred prisoners, and principally by the use of the musket, without material assistance from heavy artillery, is most astonishing. In view of it, it can not be denied that, as a feat of arms, the battle of Molino del Rey was one of the most brilliant of a war full of brilliant achievements.

The loss which befell the corps which won the victory was unusually severe. In all, 787 had fallen, killed and wounded.† Of these, fifty-nine were officers, comprising nearly one third of the whole number engaged in the battle, and including the commanders of the second brigade, of the fifth, eighth, and eleventh regiments, of the storming party, and of the light battalion. There was not one of the numerous remainder of the list but was stricken down in the advance of his corps, doing his duty with the devotion characteristic of American officers. Of those who fell, Colonel M'Intosh, Lieutenant-colonels Martin Scott and Graham, Captains Merrill and E. K. Smith, and Lieutenants Burwell and Strong, of the fifth infantry; Captain

\* Field Return. Executive Document, No. 1, House of Representatives, first Session of the thirtieth Congress, p. 368.

† Return of Killed and Wounded. *Idem*, p. 370.

Armstrong, of the staff; Captain Ayres and Lieutenant Farry, of the third, and Lieutenants Shackelford and Daniels, of the second artillery; Lieutenant Ernst, of the sixth, Lieutenants Burbank and Norris, of the eighth, Lieutenant Johnston, of the eleventh infantry, and Assistant-surgeon Roberts, all died on the field, or soon after, from the effect of their wounds.

The casualties among those of inferior rank, including nearly one fourth of the active force, prove that, like their officers, the soldiers too did their duty. Deeds of such men as those who won the battle of Molino del Rey speak louder in their praise than words can possibly do. The feeling of deep sadness which was prevalent for a period after the battle bore testimony to the appreciation of their comrades, and the deep regret felt at the loss of these brave men from the ranks of the small American army.

Nevertheless, fought and won as the battle was, its results were immediately nothing, except the capture of four pieces of artillery, and the heavy loss inflicted upon the enemy; for the positions were abandoned, and the relinquishment of them had much the semblance of a retreat. No visible advantage was gained; and, notwithstanding the loss which had been sustained, the great object, the capture of the capital, was to all appearance as far removed as before the battle.

No injury was done to the enemy by breaking up his cannon molds, for they were useless as they



were. The fact was but too apparent that a battle had been fought for an end which, when gained, proved to be a chimera, and that all advantages which might have been the fruit of so dearly purchased a victory had been relinquished without an effort to secure them. Such an event had a most powerful effect upon the morale of the American army. It was the first battle which was without immediate advantageous consequences; the first where, for any reason, the field had been immediately surrendered to the will of the enemy. In consideration of this, of the small numerical force of the army, of the heavy loss, and of the victories which remained to be achieved before the conquest of the capital, a feeling of anxiety nearly akin to doubt came over the minds of many who never had doubted before.

The blow had fallen severely upon the Mexicans on account of the number of officers and soldiers who had fallen or been taken prisoners. They could not doubt but that they had been sorely beaten, although during the continuance of the battle the bells of the city had clamorously proclaimed a victory. Yet the prevailing opinion with them was, that the defeat had been only partial, inasmuch as Chapultepec was not assaulted, and the Americans had evacuated the field which they had won. While they were still much in dread of the American army, it was confidently asserted that the result of the action taught them the power of defending the capital, and had convinced

their enemy that he could only achieve the conquest by sacrifices which would cause it to amount to a defeat. Such were the sentiments set forth in the Mexican journals;\* and, although they are not always to be implicitly relied upon, yet there is no doubt that, as in the present instance, they had more foundation for their opinions, they were more truly the indices of that of the public.

The Mexican president, however, did not reoccupy his lines in force. With the exception of strong corps in and about Chapultepec, the greater part of his beaten army was drawn back to the city, and posted at the different garitas on its south.

The American troops reoccupied the positions previously occupied. Worth's division remained at Tacubaya, Pillow's returned to San Borja and its vicinity, and Riley's brigade to Nalvarte. Twiggs and Quitman remained at San Augustin and San Angel, instead of moving up to Mixcoac, as had been intended.

During the afternoon of the 8th, under the superintendence of Captain Lee, of the engineers, reconnaissances were made of the south front of the city. The enemy had a strong picket on the Niño Perdido road, nearly a mile from the garita, which prevented a close approach without bringing on an engagement, which was not allowed by the orders of General Scott. From the steeple of a church in Piedad, however, the principal features

\* Diario del Gobierno, El Monitor Republicano, and Letters to El Boletín de Atlizco, September 8th and 9th, 1847.

of the ground were discovered sufficiently well to show that, notwithstanding fortifications had been commenced in that direction, an approach was comparatively practicable. The reconnaissance having been finished, the officers and their escort fell back, and nothing further offensive was undertaken on that afternoon or evening.

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## CHAPTER XII.

Occupation of Piedad—Mexican Lines of Defense about the Garita of San Antonio—General Scott's Orders—Reconnaissances—Meeting of General Officers at Piedad—Views and Opinions—Selection of Chapultepec as Point of Attack—Santa Anna's Movement of September 11th—Skirmish near Hacienda Morales—Movement of American Troops on the Evening of September 11th—Rock and Castle of Chapultepec—Position of American Batteries—Operations and Cannonade, September 12th—Orders for Assault.

EARLY on the morning of the 9th, a large force of Mexican cavalry was observed approaching the hacienda Nalvarte. Colonel Riley at once sent the information to General Pillow at San Borja, and as the enemy appeared to move on Piedad, some hundred yards to his front and left, he threw a battalion into that village. The cavalry retired. Pillow soon after came up with Magruder's battery, and Riley's whole command was advanced to Piedad. Pierce's brigade soon followed from San Borja, and Cadwalader's was ordered forward to take post at Nalvarte.

The main street of the village of Piedad runs



nearly east and west. Its eastern continuation is a road which intersects the causeways of El Niño Perdido and San Antonio at points distant about a mile from the city, and that of San Antonio some three hundred yards from the garita of San Antonio Abad. West the road leads from Piedad to Tacubaya. At the angle of the cross-road and that of El Niño Perdido stood a ruined hermitage, which was the position of the Mexican picket on the evening of the 8th. A party of American infantry had been sent forward so soon as the village of Piedad had been occupied, and the picket retired. The point was at once seized, and became the advanced post of the American troops.

From this position, distant about seven hundred yards from the garita of San Antonio, a clear and uninterrupted view was presented of all the ground between the two causeways to the city, and one comparatively clear of the country west of the road of El Niño Perdido in the direction of the garita Belen. In the latter direction, however, the ground was covered with vegetation, while between the causeways it was clear meadow land, crossed by a few irrigating ditches. Of these, the most considerable of all crossed the road of El Niño Perdido some sixty yards north of the hermitage. With high embankments on either side, it continued across the fields to the causeway of San Antonio, which it intersected near the junction of the cross-road from Piedad. A bridge over which the roadway of El Niño Perdido had passed had been de-

stroyed, and as the banks were high, and the ditch was some thirty feet wide, with considerable depth of water and a miry bottom, it presented some obstacle to a direct advance along that route. Other ditches of considerable depth and width were by the side of the causeway, but besides these there were few obstacles between the hermitage and the Mexican lines of defense. The high embankments of the ditch first mentioned served for a partial protection to the troops about the position from the fire of the Mexicans at the garita.

When the American officers first reconnoitered from the hermitage on the morning of the 9th, the batteries at the garitas alone, of the Mexican defenses, were finished. These were armed with but two guns.\* A line of intrenchments had been traced between the two garitas, extending diagonally across the meadow lands for nearly a mile, and, at the time, a working force of nearly 12,000 men was employed upon its construction. Between the two extremities of the line three batteries had been commenced, and their parapets were well advanced to completion. The curtains which were to connect them had only been commenced, and, notwithstanding that the Mexican laborers shoveled the earth with great celerity, so soon as the American troops came in sight they did not progress very rapidly.

\* Captain Lee's and Captain Hooker's Testimony before the Court of Inquiry. Executive Document, No. 65, Senate, first Session of the thirtieth Congress, p. 80, 168.

Seeing these fortifications in process of erection upon the very front which General Scott intended to attack, Pillow at once dispatched staff officers to give him the information. It was several hours before he was ready to proceed to Piedad, and when he arrived there, and observed the positions from the hermitage, he ordered that nothing offensive should be attempted. Pillow was directed to hold his position, and, in case it should be necessary for that purpose, to order forward directly Twiggs's remaining brigade and Quitman's division. Quitman was ordered to advance to Coyacan.

Throughout that day the Mexicans continued their labor upon the intrenchments without interruption. No reconnaissances, with a view to that duty alone, were ordered or attempted, although the progress of the works was seen by the officers at the American advanced pickets. The troops remained quiet at their different stations, but during the night the pickets at the hermitage were strengthened by infantry and artillery. A bridge was also built, during the night, across the ditch crossing the Niño Perdido road, capable of sustaining the heaviest ordnance.

The reconnaissances upon the enemy's works were commenced by the engineer officers about eleven o'clock on the morning of the 10th, and were pushed on both causeways. With a strong escort of infantry and the battery of mountain howitzers, one party proceeded across that of San Antonio to the east, sufficiently far to observe the ground be-



tween it and the canal from Lake Xochomilco. These reconnaissances gave an accurate knowledge of the enemy's positions; but, by the time they were finished, so were the works.

On the evening of the 10th, eleven pieces of artillery were in battery at and about the garita of San Antonio and the works of the line. The curtains were finished, and were strong, and the ditches in their front well filled with water. East of San Antonio, two works connected that garita with that of La Candelaria, which was likewise strongly fortified and armed. The ground in front of this part of the Mexican lines was, moreover, so covered with inundations, that an approach between the canal and the causeway of San Antonio was hazardous, if not impracticable.

On the following morning the reconnaissances were continued, but nothing more was discovered, except that the enemy had completed his arrangements for defense in that quarter. He had occupied the lines in force, and had let the water from the canal over the fields between the roads of El Niño Perdido and San Antonio, which were before dry and practicable. The whole southern front of the city, from the garita of El Niño Perdido to that of La Candelaria, was inundated.

During this while General Scott had been engaged in making preparations for the assault upon the city, in bringing up Quitman's division from San Augustin to Coyacan, in hearing the reports of reconnoitering officers, in establishing a general

depôt at Mixcoac, including the removal thither of the wounded from Molino del Rey, the spare ordnance and ordnance stores, and the baggage and supply trains.\* On the morning of the 11th he came in person to Piedad, repeated his observations upon the enemy's lines from the hermitage, and at a meeting of general officers, held at General Pillow's head-quarters in that village, determined a plan of attack upon the city.

At this meeting the general-in-chief, Generals Pillow, Quitman, Twiggs, Pierce, and Cadwalader, and Colonel Riley, were present, and many engineer and staff officers. General Scott commenced by stating that, before he left the room, he should settle his plan of attack, which would be either to cannonade and capture Chapultepec, or to operate against the lines of San Antonio. In case he determined upon the former, General Twiggs's division was to be left at and in vicinity of Piedad, in order to keep up a demonstration in that quarter. The general-in-chief gave in extenso such information as was in his possession concerning the different routes. The ordnance officers had expressed the opinion that Chapultepec could be reduced by bombardment and cannonade in one day; and as General Scott believed that he would have more room, and reason to believe that he would be met by a white flag from the city so soon as the castle

\* General Scott's Question to General Worth, General Worth's Testimony, and Captain Lee's Testimony. Executive Document, No. 65, Senate, first Session of the thirtieth Congress, p. 145, 201.

had fallen,\* his preferences were for the attack upon Chapultepec; but he was not decided, and, having stated his views and information, he asked opinions.

General Twiggs coincided with the general-in-chief, but few other generals gave any very positive opinions upon the subject. Such as were given were to a degree in favor of the attack on the southern front, although accumulated difficulties to such an attack had sprung up between the 8th and 11th; yet, if the lines in that quarter were once forced, the city was within reach. If Chapultepec were battered down or taken by assault, much distance intervened before the capital was gained. Of the defenses along that route, after passing Chapultepec, nothing was known, except that the citadel of Mexico, a work strong against assault, was directly on the prolongation of the Belen causeway, at its entrance into the city. But, though inquiries were made, nothing was urged which altered General Scott's opinion, and he gave orders preparatory to the attack upon the Castle of Chapultepec.

Twiggs was to occupy Piedad with his division, and on the following morning to open a fire from near the hermitage, on the Niño Perdido road, against the lines of San Antonio. For that purpose, Steptoe's battery of twelve pounders was ordered to report to him, in addition to Taylor's light

\* Captain Hooker's Testimony. Executive Document, No. 65, Senate, first Session of the thirtieth Congress, p. 169.



battery of his own division. Pillow and Quitman were to march their divisions after nightfall into Tacubaya, where they were to receive orders for taking position to support the heavy batteries to be planted against Chapultepec. Officers were at the time selecting the sites. Having given orders to the effect, the general-in-chief broke up the meeting and retired to Tacubaya.

During these three days Mexican action was almost entirely defensive. The greater portion of the army was stationed about the lines of San Antonio and at the garitas. Chapultepec was strongly garrisoned, and had two strong brigades within supporting distance. Alvarez still occupied the hacienda Morales in observation, but he made no offensive movement in force.

The attention of the Mexican commanders was most particularly given to the American corps stationed at Piedad; for, as it was nearest to the city, and but a single line of defenses obstructed its entrance, it was believed that the final assault would be made on the lines of San Antonio. The belief generally entertained in Mexico, that the battle of Molino del Rey had been an attack on Chapultepec, and had failed in that respect, went to keep up such an anticipation. The strictest vigilance was exercised about the point of apprehended danger. The noise which had been made in constructing the bridge on the Niño Perdido road had been heard at the lines, and during the 10th and 11th many attempts were made by the Mexicans to dis-

cover the nature of the construction. For the purpose, many officers made close reconnaissances, and, besides, peons, leperos, and even women approached the American pickets, as if engaged in ordinary avocations. They were all warned off or made prisoners.

On the afternoon of the 11th a party of Mexican officers advanced to the angle of the San Antonio causeway and the cross-road, and spent some time in observation of the American pickets at the hermitage. They could see nothing but a party of infantry on guard at the point; for the artillery, with its caissons and horses, had been slightly withdrawn from the road, and hid behind a hedge of maguey. The examination appeared to satisfy the reconnoitering officers that there was no artillery in position, and they returned to the garita.

Soon after, a column of cavalry, full five hundred strong, in full costume, and with sounding trumpets, issued from the Mexican lines, and proceeded south along the causeway. By the time it had reached the angle, Magruder's guns were run out from the maguey and opened fire with round shot. The column quickened its pace and proceeded on. The report of the artillery being heard at Piedad, Pillow ordered Riley's brigade to move out to the pickets, Pierce's to be under arms at Piedad, and proceeded in person to the hermitage. On arriving, he sent directions to Cadwalader to move rapidly across from Nalvarte to the San Antonio causeway and intercept the enemy. By the time the mes-

sage was received by Cadwalader, the cavalry had countermarched and retreated. It passed the line of fire of the American guns at speed, but did not effect its retreat without the loss of several men and horses. Meanwhile, the Mexican battery at the garita opened fire upon the pickets, knocked the hermitage to pieces, and killed one soldier; but the cavalry having gained the lines, the fire ceased on both sides.

It is difficult to understand the object of this movement, and it was beyond the comprehension of many Mexican officers who were of the party. It could hardly have been to verify the reconnaissance, and to prove whether the Americans really had a battery at that point, for the Mexican president, the secretary of war, and the whole staff of the army were with the column. They were truly in a situation of imminent peril, had the orders or intentions of the American general been such as to justify the commencement of a battle in that quarter. All which would have been necessary to insure their capture or destruction would have been to run the American guns along the cross-road to within grape range of the causeway. As Cadwalader would have been across the road in front, their retreat was cut off, and the advance was impracticable. Whatever the object of the movement was, Santa Anna effected it, as the Americans did not know of the prize within their reach, and their orders did not permit them to open an engagement which might bring on a battle.



Another skirmish took place on the 11th in the direction of the hacienda Morales. A party of American dragoons, reconnoitering in that vicinity, fell in with a corps of Alvarez's cavalry. The Mexicans accepted the conflict, but were soon dispersed with the loss of a captain and several soldiers. The dragoons returned to Tacubaya.

Before dark on the evening of the 11th, Twiggs brought Smith's brigade and Steptoe's and Taylor's batteries up to Piedad, and Quitman advanced his division to Nalvarte. At nine o'clock Pillow withdrew his troops from both points and marched to Tacubaya, leaving Riley's brigade with its proper division. Quitman soon followed him, and shortly after his arrival both generals received their instructions from the general-in-chief.

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The position of the rock and castle of Chapultepec has been heretofore mentioned in the general description of the defenses of Mexico, and of the locality of Molino del Rey. The inclosure, of which that range of buildings formed the western side, was bounded on the south by a wall, extending from Molino del Rey to the main road from Tacubaya to the city. It was near sixteen hundred yards in length, and generally straight, though broken near the eastern extremity by several projections and angles. The wall was about fifteen feet in height, but only of ordinary thickness, and not proof against cannon shot. The ground between the wall and Tacu-

baya was somewhat cut up by irrigating ditches and hedges of maguey, but generally level and practicable. A redan had been constructed to cover a cut in the wall, about nine hundred yards from Molino del Rey, and which, had it been armed with artillery, would have given a flank fire along the wall to the west. Near the southeastern angle of the inclosure, strong barricades had been built across the Tacubaya road, and armed with artillery. In rear of them and next the angle was a lunette, with wet ditches, and armed with four guns. This battery completely swept the direct approach by the road as well as the level ground west of it in the direction of Tacubaya. The inner side of the wall of the inclosure was provided with wooden banquettes, enabling infantry to fire over to support the batteries.

The eastern side was but a simple wall, and as it was within the line of defenses, none had been constructed immediately connected with it. Through it, however, the main gate opened into the inclosure, and from its northern and southern extremities respectively, the roads led by the side of the aqueducts of San Cosme and Belen to the city.

The northern side of the inclosure was formed by the aqueduct of San Cosme, the arches of which had been filled with heavy masonry. On the road immediately to the north of the aqueduct two barricades had been constructed, one near the northeastern angle, and the other some hundred yards to the west of it, both looking to the west.

For five hundred yards immediately east of Molino del Rey, the ground inside the inclosure was an open, cultivated field. East of the field, a deep irrigating ditch, with embankments, running north and south, divided the inclosure. Nearest the aqueduct on the north, a redan breast-work for infantry had been constructed. Thence and from the embankments of the ditch the approaches from the west from Molino del Rey could be swept with a musketry fire. All the level ground inside of the inclosure east of the positions was covered by an ancient cypress grove. The soil was exceedingly marshy for some five hundred yards, except on two pathways. One of these led through the center of the grove to the foot of the rock, and the second and widest inside of and along the southern wall.

The rock of Chapultepec rose in the eastern part of the inclosure to the height of one hundred and fifty feet, and the fortifications around it and the castle by which it is crowned formed the great strength of the position.

The northern side of the rock was so precipitous as to be entirely inaccessible ; for, besides being exceedingly rugged throughout, there was a perpendicular descent of nearly fifty feet. The eastern and a portion of the southern side were nearly as broken and impracticable as the northern. The southwestern and western sides, although savagely rugged and precipitous, were yet practicable for infantry.

The castle was built to conform to the general



outline of the crest of the rock, and was, therefore, quite irregular ; but, nevertheless, the principles of the engineer's art had, in the main, been attended to. The northern front was, in general, a parapet wall of heavy masonry, with a semicircular projection at about its center, giving a flank fire in the direction of the Molino del Rey, and along the road north of the aqueduct of San Cosme. The eastern front had no parapet immediately surrounding it, but was formed by a terrace built on the highest point of the rock.

A little space intervened between the terrace and the southern parapet wall, at the eastern extremity of which was a semicircular bastion for one gun. For some thirty yards west the parapet was generally straight, but there a semicircular projection, corresponding in position to the one on the north, gave room for the location of several guns. West of the semicircle was the only gateway into the castle. Beyond the gateway to the southwestern angle, the trace was that of a *cremallière* line, which gave a fire of two guns from its flanks upon the approach from the southwest, as well as upon the ramp leading up to the castle.

The western front, which was quite narrow, was in the form of a priest-cap, and was covered by the only ditch about the work. It was some twelve feet wide and ten deep.

The buildings inside these fortifications were the military college of Chapultepec and its dependencies. The college was once the palace of a Span-

ish viceroy, and was heavily and solidly built, as Spanish buildings generally are. It occupied a large portion of the enceinte, and extended to the terrace on the east, though a considerable space was left between the building and the parapets of the northern and southern fronts, and still more between it and the western. A solid splinter-proof had been constructed around the southern, western, and northern sides of the college, covering the walls of the lower story. The western part of the roof was likewise covered by a heavy frame-work of timber for a bomb-proof; but, although well piled up with sand-bags, the work had not been completed. A parapet wall, strengthened by sand-bags, extended around the whole azotea. By this, a musketry fire was secured upon the walls from the azotea as well as from the windows of the upper story, which were left open.

On the west of the college, some detached stone buildings, furnished with sand-bag parapets around their azoteas, overlooked the walls from a short distance.

Eleven pieces of artillery were mounted upon the works. Two twenty-four pounder howitzers were in the semicircle on the northern front, one eight pounder at the southeastern angle, two sixteens and an eight-inch howitzer in the large semicircle on the south front, three pieces of small caliber on the cremallière line, and two iron thirty-two pounders in the priest-cap. Besides this armament there were two small four pounder howitzers

upon the terre-plein of the south front, which might have been intended for the defense of the gateway. All the guns on the west were covered by splinter-proofs of timber and sand-bags, solidly constructed.

The roadway from the base of the rock to the castle ran from the southeastern base along the southern declivity to a round battery about half way up the hill, at a point opposite the western extremity of the fortification. Turning there in a sharp angle, it ascended to the gate. The southern and exterior side of the roadway was protected by an earthen parapet for its whole distance. The round battery at its angle was armed with a four pounder, which could be used to sweep the roadway, or an approach from the west along the southern exterior wall. Outside of this battery was a breast-work for infantry, looking southwest, and giving a fire along the road by the southern wall.

The western declivity of the rock was mined about half way up the ascent, but the saucissons were laid over the ground, and only extended to the ditch of the priest-cap. Immediately below the mines a redan had been constructed, affording a front of fire for about fifty muskets, toward the west, and along the center path through the grove.

There were no exterior defenses immediately around the northern, eastern, or eastern portion of the southern fronts. The ground between the base of the rock and the exterior walls of the inclosure, besides being principally covered by the grove, was cut up by walls and aqueducts.

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The castle and its dependencies were under command of General of Division Don Nicolas Bravo, a leader celebrated in the Mexican war of independence, and prominent in the whole history of the country. A strong corps of infantry held the woods west of the rock, occupying the intrenchments and ditch on the verge of the grove, and the redan covering the cut in the south wall of the exterior inclosure. Two large brigades, under Generals Peña y Barragan and Rangel, were in position around the western base of the hill, and in the batteries on the Tacubaya road. A garrison of near 2000 men, under General Bravo's immediate command, occupied the castle and the exterior defense on the west. The total of the defending forces was at least 6000 men.

Positions had been selected by the American engineer and ordnance officers on the 11th for three heavy batteries against the castle and its dependencies.

The first was on the direct road from Tacubaya, which led past Chapultepec to the city. It was in the vicinity of the hacienda Condesa, on the outskirts of the village, and looked to the south front of the castle.

The second was near the road from Molino del Rey, distant about eight hundred yards from the village, and looked to the southwestern angle of the fortification.

The third was on the prolongation of this road, behind a short aqueduct south of Molino del Rey, and in close vicinity to that range of buildings.

Batteries Nos. 1 and 2 were in process of construction during the night. As No. 3 was near Molino del Rey, and it was not known whether that point were not occupied by the enemy, its commencement was delayed until the following day.

Quitman was ordered to support batteries Nos. 1 and 2, and early on the morning of the 12th he moved down to the hacienda Condesa with the main body of his force. His left was extended through the suburbs and fields in such manner as to support the second battery.

Pillow's troops were to occupy the ground on the west of Chapultepec. He was ordered to take position on the battle ground of the 8th before dawn, and, if the enemy were not in possession of Molino del Rey, to seize and occupy it. If the position were held by the enemy, he was to drive him out of it with the assistance of the fire of battery No. 2, and to hold it for the support of the battery to be planted in the vicinity.

Pillow moved out to the plains at three o'clock in the morning, and organized a select party of light troops, under Lieutenant-colonel Hébert, for the purpose of seizing the position. So soon as day broke, Captain Hooker rode down to the mills, and, as they were unoccupied, Hébert's party advanced at a run. The enemy observed the movement, and opened fire from Chapultepec; but it had no effect, and Molino del Rey was seized without loss. The remaining troops of Cadwalader's brigade were sent

round by Casa Mata to the position, which was thus securely occupied. The ninth and fifteenth regiments, Magruder's battery, the mountain howitzers, and Major Sumner's dragoons, were left upon the plains, out of range of Chapultepec, in observation of Alvarez's troops. These were under arms about the hacienda Morales, and at times threatened an advance.

At seven o'clock the American batteries Nos. 1 and 2 opened upon the castle. No. 1 was armed with two captured sixteen pounders and one eight-inch howitzer, and No. 2 one siege howitzer of like caliber and one twenty-four pounder. All of the cannon were served with rapidity against the enemy's works; but some were without platforms, the distance was near twelve hundred yards, and, for a time, many shot flew wide of their mark.

The enemy, who had previously given his attention to the troops on the plain west of Molino del Rey, turned all his guns which would bear upon the batteries. They had not much effect, for the Americans were well sheltered by their parapets, and partially hidden in the bushes.

The fire from and against Chapultepec was unremitted throughout the morning, except for a short time, in which the Americans were engaged in laying their platforms. When these were finished, the practice was exceedingly good, and every shot struck. But the distance was so great that it is a matter of surprise how it could have been deemed possible that the castle could be reduced byartil-



lery alone. The batteries were efficient as counter batteries, and it is true that the shot and shell crashed through the walls of the college inside the works, and killed quite a number of the garrison ; but the parapets were entirely uninjured, and the Mexican fire was kept up vigorously for some time. A sixteen pounder and an eight-inch howitzer were brought forward, to be placed in battery at the third position which had been selected ; but the parapets had not been constructed, and the enemy's fire was so severe that the work was for a time impracticable. The cannon were therefore taken to the northern side of Molino del Rey, and thence were served against the enemy's pickets.

Toward noon, however, the Mexican fire began visibly to slacken. Under the American practice one eight-inch howitzer had been disabled in the castle. Another casualty was the explosion of an iron thirty-two pounder, which had destroyed some thirteen of the garrison.

The falling off allowed the engineer officers to proceed with the construction of battery No. 3, and during the afternoon it was armed and opened fire. A ten-inch mortar was brought up and planted on the left of this battery, and thence the castle was bombarded until dark.

During the day General Quitman and staff made a close reconnaissance of the batteries on the Tacubaya road, at the southeastern angle of the inclosure of Chapultepec, which gave a knowledge of their locality and strength. The enemy kept up

a lively fire upon the reconnoitering party from the castle and lower batteries. Strong parties of infantry came out, and opened upon it with musketry. Quitman, however, completed his reconnaissance, and fell back, with the loss of seven wounded men.\*

Pillow, too, had been observing the approaches from Molino del Rey. Parties of his troops kept up a straggling fire from the walls of the buildings upon the Mexican troops in the intrenchments on the verge of the grove. The range was far too great, and the fire was perfectly harmless. This the enemy soon discovered, and became quite careless; but the mountain howitzers were brought down from the plains, and opened fire through an archway. They soon drove the enemy to cover in some confusion, besides annoying a large body of troops from the garrison of the castle, which had taken shelter from the cannonade in the woods.

While the cannonade against Chapultepec continued, the demonstration which Twiggs had been ordered to keep on the lines of San Antonio had been duly executed. Steptoe's battery had been located near the hermitage on the Niño Perdido road during the night, and opened fire at the break of day. For some hours it was rapidly continued, and doubtless diverted the attention of the enemy from the batteries in process of erection about Chapultepec. Indeed, many Mexicans believed that

\* General Quitman's Report. Executive Document, No. 1, House of Representatives, first Session of the thirtieth Congress, p. 410.

the main attack was to be made on the lines, and that the cannonade of Chapultepec was the feint. The Mexican president was, however, not of the number, and about noon the fire from the lines of San Antonio slackened, and was after that time continued only at intervals.

Santa Anna had given his attention to both points of the American attack, but particularly to Chapultepec. While he kept a large force around the garitas of San Antonio and El Niño Perdido, he made inquiries of General Bravo, at different times, whether he wanted re-enforcement. At Bravo's request, he ordered the battalion of San Blas to re-enforce the infantry in the woods west of the castle. Toward night he came in person to the position, and had a conference with Bravo relative to its defense. Santa Anna had determined to withdraw the troops from the grove, and limit the defense to the castle alone. Bravo insisted upon the defense of the woods as of vital importance, and, after some discussion, Santa Anna yielded his opinion.\* The battalion of San Blas had been withdrawn, but Bravo was assured that he should be strongly re-enforced in that quarter in case of an assault. The troops were not immediately sent, in order to present as few as possible to the American missiles.

In anticipation of the necessity of carrying Chapultepec by assault, General Scott had ordered the collection of scaling ladders and other materiel on

\* General Bravo's Report. El Monitor Republicano.



the 12th,\* and they were in readiness during the afternoon. Toward evening, when it became evident that the cannonade and bombardment alone would avail but little, he contemplated ordering the immediate storm of the castle. His object was to prevent the repair of any damage which might have been inflicted, and the partial recovery of moral force on the part of the garrison, deemed to have been much impaired, during the cessation of fire through the night.† But when he received the reports of his engineer officers, it was already late, and the arrangements necessary for the assault were not fully completed. He therefore delayed action until the following morning, and the cannonade continued until nightfall.

The Americans had lost but a very few men during the day, and the only damage done to material was the breaking of the stock of one of the captured sixteen pounders. This threw it out of action; but all other cannon were kept in lively play until the final cessation of the fire.

At dark General Pillow drew the ninth and fifteenth infantry, and Magruder's battery, from the plains, where they had been in observation, down to Molino del Rey, which was thus held by his whole force. The American dragoons had returned to Tacubaya. Parties of Alvarez's men crossed the ravine, and occupied the abandoned posi-

\* General Worth's Testimony before the Court of Inquiry. Executive Document, No. 65, Senate, first Session of the thirtieth Congress, p. 201.

† Captain Lee's Testimony. *Idem*, p. 143.

tion; but they did not attempt a near approach either to Tacubaya or Molino del Rey. Except the changes brought about by these movements, on the evening of the 12th the troops of either army occupied the same positions which had been held throughout the day.

During the evening Generals Pillow and Quitman were summoned to General Scott's quarters to receive their instructions for the final assault. For this duty, a storming party 250 strong had been organized from each of the veteran divisions of the army. That from Worth's was to report to Pillow, and from Twiggs's to Quitman. The ladders, crow's, and other implements were all in readiness, and the plan of attack and the time of the assault were all which remained to be determined.

At the meeting, General Scott explained the ground and the nature of the defenses to the extent of his information, and several plans and modifications were proposed and discussed; but, in general, the orders finally determined upon and issued were the following: The American batteries were to be repaired during the night, and were to open with all their strength at early dawn both upon Chapultepec and the lines of San Antonio. Eight o'clock was the hour fixed for the cessation of those against Chapultepec, and for the advance of the two divisions, re-enforced by the storming parties, upon their several routes of attack. Quitman's was along the Tacubaya road, upon the batteries at the base of the hill, and over them and the wall

of the exterior inclosure to the castle. Pillow's lay through Molino del Rey, over the intrenchments on the west of the grove, and through the grove to the same end. Worth was ordered to be under arms in Tacubaya, in readiness to support Pillow's attack. Twiggs was directed to send one brigade to within supporting distance of Quitman; the other he was to retain to support the batteries on the Niño Perdido road, and to keep up the diversion in that quarter as much as possible. With orders to this effect, the meeting broke up, and the general officers returned to their stations.

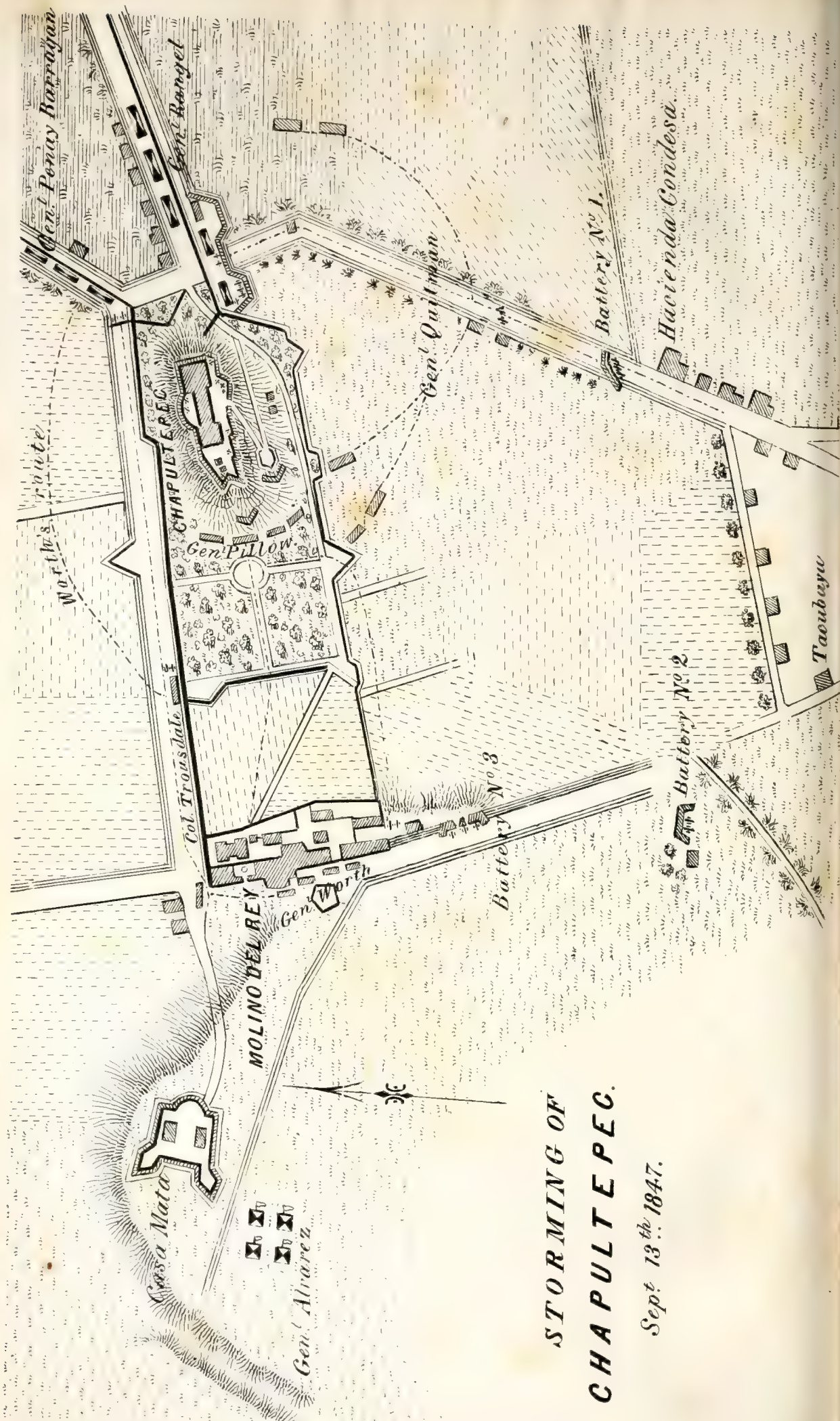
In the early part of the night a brisk skirmish took place between the advanced pickets on the Tacubaya road. Under the belief that re-enforcements were moving into Chapultepec, Quitman ordered a gun to be advanced from battery No. 1, and discharged several times in that direction. After this fire had ceased, the troops about the different positions were quiet, and the batteries on both sides were silent.

A slight noise about Chapultepec told that the garrison was preparing for the following day, and at the American batteries parties were at work repairing platforms and parapets. Throughout the American lines all the soldiers laid upon their arms, awaiting the dawn of day.

The course of events and the evident preparations had told all that the morrow was to see the final effort of the army. It was felt that success and the object of the campaign, the capture of the







# STORMING OF CHAPULTEPEC.

Sept. 13<sup>th</sup> 1847.

capital, was then to be obtained, or the alternative of defeat and disaster was to befall the army for the first time since the commencement of the war. While, therefore, preparations for the struggle were made without dread, and with a firm determination to do and dare all for the victory, yet, under all the circumstances, under the influence of the delays which had occurred, of the armistice, of the absence of all direct result to the battle of the 8th, the knowledge that during the three succeeding days the enemy had been strengthening his positions, and the immense disparity of force which still existed, it can not be wondered at that those who reflected at all upon the situation of the army, looked upon the approaching conflict with an anxiety with which none previous had been anticipated.

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### CHAPTER XIII.

Dispositions for the Attack on Chapultepec—*Storming of the Castle*—Assault of Batteries on the Tacubaya Road—Of Barricades on the North of Chapultepec—Pursuit along the Belen Road—Capture of Battery—Storming of Garita Belen—Santa Anna's Efforts for Defense—Pursuit along the San Cosme Road—Capture of Work at the Angle of Aqueduct of Barricade—Storming of Garita San Cosme—Entrance into Mexico—Retreat of Mexican Army—Deputation to General Scott—Occupation of the City.

THE morning of September 13th broke brightly, and at the earliest dawn the full power of the American batteries was again directed upon the Castle of Chapultepec. The batteries on the Niño



Perdido road likewise opened, and continued a lively fire upon the lines at San Antonio. The Mexicans replied promptly from both places, and for some hours the cannonade on both sides was as quick and rapid as it had been at any time on the previous day.

The greater strength being directed against Chapultepec, General Bravo was convinced that that point would soon be assaulted, and wrote to General Alcorta, the Secretary of War, demanding the re-enforcement which had been promised him.\* The note was received, and submitted to Santa Anna, who was at the time at the house of Afaro; but he gave no immediate attention to the requisition. Some time later Bravo sent orders to General Rangel to march his troops into the castle, for, from the state of American preparations, he believed that the assaulting columns were about to advance.† But Generals Rangel and Peña y Barragan were stationed at the batteries on the Tacubaya road, and at the barricades on that to the north of Chapultepec. Both refused to move to the castle without the orders of Santa Anna; therefore the direct defense against the American assault from the west was to be made by the garrison of the castle and its immediate outworks, and the troops in the intrenchments on the west of the grove.

The preparations of the American commanders were rapidly progressing. The storming parties from the veteran divisions had arrived at the posi-

\* General Bravo's Official Report. *El Monitor Republicano*.

† *Idem*.

tions whence the two assaults were to be made, and the ladders and other material were brought forward. Quitman, however, had a storming party from his own division, to which he gave his ladders and other implements for assault.\* As his advance from the hacienda Condesa brought him immediately under the fire of the enemy's batteries on the Tacubaya road, and lay along that road and the level ground on its west and north, he held his troops in hand about the hacienda until the designated moment for the assault.

The corps of Pillow's division, having more complicated ground and a greater variety of duties, were in the mean time variously disposed. The first obstacle to be overcome in the advance from the west being the intrenchments on the verge of the grove, whence musketry fire could sweep the open ground between them and Molino del Rey, it was intended to turn them. For this purpose, a battalion of voltigeurs was posted at the southern extremity of the buildings, in positions for advancing upon the redan covering the cut in the southern wall of the inclosure, which being taken, the grove could be penetrated, and the intrenchments attacked in reverse. In rear of this battalion was posted the storming party from Worth's division, which was to support the assault on the redan, if necessary, or, if not, to follow the movement, and take the advance after the foot of the rock was

\* General Quitman's Official Report. Executive Document, No. 1, House of Representatives, first Session of the thirtieth Congress, p. 411.

gained for the immediate assault upon the castle. To favor the movement upon the redan, two pieces of Magruder's light battery opened fire from the vicinity of Molino del Rey, and forced the Mexican troops in the position to keep close under the shelter of their parapets.\*

The mountain howitzers opened fire upon the intrenchments through the narrow gateway opening from Molino del Rey into the inclosure. Close at the gate, the first battalion of voltigeurs was held in readiness for the direct advance. This corps was to move across the open ground at a run, cross the intrenchments, and enter the grove, where it was to join with the troops of the second battalion. The whole were then to beat through to the foot of the hill, clearing the way to that point, where the regiment was to form as a supporting force. The ninth and fifteenth regiments were to follow and sustain the assault, and were drawn up in a court-yard near the voltigeurs.

The battalions of the eleventh and fourteenth regiments, and two pieces of Magruder's battery, all under Colonel Trousdale, were posted at the north-western angle of Molino del Rey, for the double purpose of watching Alvarez (who had again advanced from the direction of the hacienda Morales to within observing distance, though beyond six pound range), and the position of Peña y Barragan on the northern road by the aqueduct. Except

\* General Pillow's Official Report. Executive Document, No. 1, House of Representatives, first Session of the thirtieth Congress, p. 401.



under a contingency, this corps was to hold its position until the castle fell; but in case re-enforcements were seen to be entering the castle, it was to engage them at all hazards.\*

In order that the victory might not be left to any uncertainty, while these dispositions were being made, Pillow sent a request to General Scott that Worth's division, which was to support his assault, should be posted nearer the scene of action than Tacubaya. General Scott so ordered it; but Worth was already in motion for the purpose. Before he arrived at Molino del Rey, the time for preparation had expired, and Quitman had sent word to Pillow that he was ready for the assault. Pillow had not quite finished his preparations, and during the few minutes which intervened before the arrival of General Scott's staff officer, the heavy guns of battery No. 3 poured successive discharges of heavy grape and shell into the grove. The orders for the cessation of fire were soon received; the American batteries, heavy and light, ceased at once, and the attack commenced.

Lieutenant-colonel Johnstone led his voltigeurs rapidly down from Molino del Rey to the level ground about the redan which he was to assault, keeping close under the southern wall of the inclosure, to protect his men from the artillery fire of the castle. The stormers under Captain M'Kenzie, second artillery, followed close after. When the

\* General Pillow's Official Report. Executive Document, No. 1, House of Representatives, first Session of the thirtieth Congress, p. 402.

advance of the voltigeurs came within musket range of the redan, the Mexican infantry behind its parapet arose and commenced a lively fire. Johnstone immediately ordered his companies to deploy and reply advancing, which they did with so much effect that the enemy was driven from the work before the rearmost company was in line. The whole battalion, rushing through two ditches across the path and over the parapet, entered the redan, and through the cut into the grove, joining with the main force which had advanced through the gateway of Molino del Rey.

The Mexican batteries on the west of the castle had obtained the range of the gateway during the morning, and kept up a heavy fire of shells for half an hour before the advance. The effect was but to annoy the troops in position, and to render them somewhat restless, for they were protected from the splinters by the walls of the buildings. Under the circumstances, Cadwalader, who was the senior officer immediately at the point, was anxious to commence the assault, and sent to advise Pillow of the existing state of things. The mountain howitzers, meanwhile, were served through the gateway, under the fire from the castle and from the intrenchments; for, notwithstanding the distance, the enemy kept up heavy discharges of musketry. They had somewhat shaken his line along the point of the grove, when, as the heavy guns ceased firing, Pillow arrived, and ordered Colonel Andrews to advance the first bat-

talion of voltigeurs. The corps, issuing through the gateways, deployed forward at a run, and with a shout, which told the determination for victory, rushed straight at the intrenchments. The Mexicans delivered a scattering fire, and gave way, for Johnstone's soldiers were at the moment breaking into the grove through the redan. Both battalions of voltigeurs took the cover of the trees, and, engaging the enemy, beat him back through the woods in the direction of the castle.

Seeing the first point gained, Pillow ordered the howitzer battery and the ninth and fifteenth regiments to move forward in support. These troops passed the gateway and deployed in the field, and Pillow mounted and took the advance.

Meanwhile the attention of the garrison in the western portions of the castle was given to the assault in this direction. The guns in the priest-cap and on the flanks were depressed, and sent heavy discharges of grape over the heads of the retreating Mexicans. The four pounder in the round bastion at the angle of the roadway kept up a raking fire on the road by the southern wall, which was sustained by a continued stream of musketry from the intrenchments in its front.

The American advance was continued, though slowly, under the heavy fire, as well as that of the retreating Mexican infantry. It was difficult, for the ground was wet and boggy, and the moral and physical effect of the Mexican shot, crashing and tearing as it did through the foliage, was such as

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in some cases to render the men averse to leave the shelter of the trees. Pillow placed himself in the front, and by his well-seconded efforts, a continued movement was established, although the nature of the ground caused the corps to be thrown into some disarray. Advancing in this manner, the troops drove back the enemy and reached the short open space at the foot of the hill. There they were halted to allow the stormers to take the front, and to form in support. But M'Kenzie, having his party in close formation, had not been able to keep up with the advance over the boggy ground. He had not arrived at the base of the hill before the enemy rallied in the redan half way up the acclivity, and opened fire thence, as well as from the round bastion and the intrenchments in its front. The galling fire rendered immediate movement necessary, and Pillow, who had just previously been wounded, ordered the assault.

The mountain howitzers sent a few canisters, and the voltigeur regiment threw a volley up the hill from the base south of the redan. That regiment immediately followed, led by Lieutenant-colonel Johnstone and Major Caldwell. At the same time, Captain Hooker, who was on the left, repeated the order, and brought up the nearest body of infantry, for the voltigeurs were without bayonets. Captain Chase, of the fifteenth infantry, led his company up to the redan from the north. The Americans pressed forward so rapidly that the enemy made short resistance, and fell back to the main

work. The voltigeurs, ninth and fifteenth, followed close after, passed the redan, and gained the crest of the hill. A Mexican engineer officer was at the time in the act of firing the saucisson of the mines, but the fire of the American advance disabled him. The saucissons were immediately cut, and that element of danger was effectually destroyed.\*

As the Americans rose over the crest, the Mexican artillery in the priest-cap opened heavily with canister, and the troops on the azoteas and at the windows commenced a rapid rolling discharge of musketry, and many of the assailants fell killed or wounded. Of the former was Colonel Ransom, of the ninth, who died gallantly at the head of his regiment. As the troops were at the time without ladders with which to scale the walls, further immediate advance was impracticable. They therefore kept in the rocks, and opened fire upon the Mexican artillerymen who were not more than fifty yards distant.

A mountain howitzer was brought up and opened upon the round bastion, which was commanded by points of the hill already gained. Its fire, and that of a party of voltigeurs closely delivered, soon drove out the enemy, and the point was at once occupied. The effect of the rifles and muskets directed upon the main work was soon apparent from

\* General Scott's Official Report. Executive Document, No. 1, House of Representatives, first Session of the thirtieth Congress, p. 378, and General Bravo's Report.

the cessation of the artillery fire, although the infantry, from roofs and windows, still kept up a stream of musketry upon the assailants. These, however, kept close behind the rocks of the height, awaiting the arrival of the storming party and the ladders, and in the while using their weapons with deadly effect upon all of the garrison who presented themselves in sight and within range.

Meantime Captain M'Kenzie arrived at the base of the hill, and, finding that the other troops had preceded him in the ascent, in obedience to Pillow's order he led his party rapidly up. It climbed over the rocks and made its way to the advance, but the troops around the crest were so closely posted that it was difficult for the stormers to get through. The ladders were not yet up, for the men of the carrying party had thrown them down in the grove, and for the most part engaged in the combat.

Being disabled from active advance, Pillow had sent Cadwalader up the ascent to give immediate attention to the movements of the assault. Seeing the state of affairs, that officer at once sent parties to collect and bring up the ladders. While this work was being accomplished, other troops came up in support.

While advancing through the grove, Pillow had received a message from Worth that his division was outside Molino del Rey, in readiness to support the attack. In answer, Pillow requested that a brigade should be advanced through the buildings to take post in the woods, as, in case of a check, time



would be lost in bringing re-enforcements forward by the flank through the narrow gateway. Worth ordered Colonel Clarke's brigade to advance, and that corps came rapidly forward. To shelter the troops from the shot which was falling in the grove, Pillow ordered them to be posted on the slope of the hill. The eighth and fifth, and a party of the sixth regiment, went up the ascent.

The sixth was, however, ordered around the northern base of the rock, to cut up the fugitives from the castle; for the Mexican garrison was already shaken by the near approach, and many were attempting to make good their escape.

The New York and second Pennsylvania regiments of Quitman's command soon after came through the bastion and cut, which had been carried by Johnstone's command, and, passing through the grove, commenced ascending the hill. By the time they had joined the rear of the forces already in position, a number of ladders had been gathered and taken up, and the final assault commenced.

The Mexican artillery fire having been silenced, the troops most in advance had only been awaiting the ladders to make the last attack. When they were brought up, parties from different corps, running quickly forward over the rugged though short space between the crest of the hill and the ditch, leaped in, and at once planted their ladders. Lieutenant Armistead, of the storming party, led the way, and, as the ladders were raised, Lieutenant Selden first mounted to scale the walls. From

azoteas and windows the Mexicans redoubled their musketry fire, which killed Lieutenants Rogers and Smith, of the stormers, who were urging on their men, struck down Selden, and with him several soldiers who had been the first to follow his example; but the assailants in the ditch clustered thick around the ladders already planted and constantly being raised. Many fell wounded or dead, yet their places were immediately taken; and, finally, Captain Howard, of the voltigeurs, gained the parapet unhurt. Captain M'Kenzie and many of his party, Captain Barnard, of the voltigeurs, with the colors of his regiment (the first in the work), Lieutenant Bennet, of the 15th, and a crowd of gallant officers and men, followed after. Long ladders were brought up and laid across the ditch, and, with a shout of victory, the great body of the troops rushed over, under fire from the buildings inside of the castle, and the priest-cap was gained.

Further down the hill, Lieutenant-colonel Johnstone led a party of voltigeurs and soldiers of other regiments over the round bastion and up the roadway, directly upon the gate of the castle. From the south front of the college, and from the eastern terrace, the enemy fired heavily upon these assailants. Lieutenant Reno's mountain howitzers, which were with the advance, were opened upon the terrace in reply, while the soldiers used their rifles and muskets against the enemy in the windows and about the parapets so effectually that his fire soon slackened. Running up the roadway,

the party entered at the gate, and joined the advance of those assailants which had entered over the priest-cap. The advance was pursued, and the enemy was rapidly pushed from the eastern terrace and the whole southern front of the castle. Many Mexicans, in their flight, jumped down the steep eastern side of the rock, regardless of the height, while the Americans pelted them from the parapets.

This part of the castle being won, and finding the enemy still strong in the lower batteries, and contesting the assault along the Tacubaya road with vigor, Johnstone posted a party of voltigeurs and other troops on the southeastern angle of the castle. These opened a heavy fire upon the enemy's rear, which soon told, and insured his retreat.\*

Meanwhile the whole castle had been occupied. Different parties entered at different doors of the college, and although the Mexicans kept up a resistance for a time, it was soon overcome; but while it lasted the American soldiers showed more ferocity than had been exhibited by them during the whole course of the war. The remembrance of the murder of their wounded comrades on the field of Molino del Rey was still fresh, and, where resistance was made, quarter was rarely given. General Perez was killed fighting; Colonel Caño, engineer of the castle, and a host of inferior officers and soldiers, fell in the tumult; and although the

\* Testimony of Lieutenant-colonel Johnstone, Captain Hooker, and Lieutenant Bennet, before the Court of Inquiry in the case of Major-general Pillow. Executive Document, No. 65, Senate, first Session of the thirtieth Congress, p. 158, 172, and 221.



struggle lasted but a few minutes, it was not until the soldiers were satiated with revenge, and the first fury consequent upon the successful assault had passed away, that the bloodshed was put a stop to. But, in the midst of the *melée*, Generals Bravo, Monterde, Noriega, Dosamantes, and Saldana were taken prisoners, and protected from injury.

While the struggle continued on the *terre-plein* and inside the college, parties of American officers and soldiers made their way through the different rooms of the building to the *azotea*. Major Seymour, of the ninth infantry, tore down the Mexican flag, and, soon after, the standards of the eighth and fifteenth regiments of infantry, and the New York Volunteers, were thrown out from the highest points of the castle. The shouts of the victors announced to Mexico that Chapultepec, the strong defense on the west of her capital, was in possession of her enemy.

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When the fire of the heavy batteries ceased, General Quitman advanced his storming party along the Tacubaya road to within two hundred yards of the lower batteries. Several buildings at that point afforded partial shelter. The enemy in the batteries kept up a heavy fire of artillery and musketry, which cut up the soldiers severely. The direct advance was not immediately persisted in. The volunteer regiments advanced to the point in support of the stormers, but there their point of di-

rection was changed; they were ordered to cross the fields and make their way over the southern walls of the inclosure.\*

General Shields led the South Carolina, New York, and Pennsylvania troops to that attack, but the batteries were turned upon them with destructive effect. Shields was severely wounded; Lieutenant-colonel Baxter, who commanded the New York regiment, was mortally injured; numerous other brave officers and soldiers fell, and the South Carolina troops alone reached the wall at the designated point.

The New York and Pennsylvania regiments inclined strongly to the left, crossed several ditches, and entered at the redan, through which Johnstone's battalion and Mackenzie's stormers, of Pillow's command, had passed. Continuing on through the grove, as has been seen, they followed the corps which had ascended the hill into the main work of Chapultepec.

The South Carolina troops breached the wall with picks and crow's at a point between the redan and the batteries.

Meanwhile battery No. 1 reopened its fire upon the different Mexican positions. Lieutenant Hunt, who had reported to Quitman with a section of Duncan's battery, served his guns upon points where the Mexicans mustered thickest to oppose the advance of Pillow's command, then around the

\* General Quitman's Report. Executive Document, No. 1, House of Representatives, first Session of the thirtieth Congress, p. 412.

crest of the hill. Battery No. 3 likewise opened over the heads of the troops, and fired several shot into the castle to assist the assault which has been described. General Smith, whose brigade had been held to support Quitman's assault, extended to his right, to protect the right flank of the attacking column from any force of the enemy which might advance along the aqueduct from the city.

When the South Carolina regiment had made its way through and over the wall,\* Quitman ordered the advance direct upon the batteries. The storming parties rushed down the road, and were received with a storm of musketry and canister, which cut them up and retarded the advance for a time. Major Twiggs, of the marines, who commanded, fell dead. Captain Casey, of the second infantry, who led the party from the second division, was severely wounded; Lieutenant Gantt, of the seventh, of the same party, was killed, and a large number of the rank and file likewise fell. But the troops held their ground and pressed on, until, finally, the castle above having been taken, they entered the Mexican barricades with a portion of the rifle regiment which had been advanced from the right of Smith's command.

A part of General Rangel's brigade sustained the conflict for a few minutes, but the greater portion had commenced to retreat when Johnstone's party opened fire from the castle above. Smith's brigade

\* General Quitman's Report. Executive Document, No. 1, House of Representatives, first Session of the thirtieth Congress, p. 413.



was brought rapidly forward, and in a short time the struggle, although deadly while it lasted, was finished at the lower batteries. In it the gallant Colonel Xicotencatl, commanding the battalion of San Blas, fell dead at his post, in a manner which would have done honor even to the noble Tlascalcan whose name he bore.

In the mean while the grounds around the east of the rock had been cleared of the enemy by the fire from the castle and parties which had descended the hill for that duty. The battalion of the sixth infantry, which had been sent round the base of the rock from the west, continued its march, driving the enemy's parties before it to the eastern gate of the inclosure. Some effected an escape thence along the causeways, but the greater number were intercepted and taken prisoners by the troops of Quitman's command then coming through the lower batteries. Some had endeavored to escape observation in the dense foliage, but all were finally dispersed, taken prisoners, or slain.

Inside the castle the confusion was, as usual after an assault, extreme. The success had relieved the minds of all of any apprehension as to the final results of the operations of the army, and, in the intoxication of the moment, efforts to enforce order in the work were unavailing. Pillow, who had been brought up, and was the first general officer in the castle, Cadwalader, and other superior and staff officers, endeavored to cause the troops to form; but, upon the appearance of their generals,

the soldiers gave vent to their enthusiasm in long and continued cheers, and forgot the orders the next moment. Finally, Cadwalader made himself heard from one of the balconies of the college, and order commenced to be restored.

So soon as the batteries and the prisoners taken near them, of which there were several hundred, had been secured, Quitman ordered the rifle regiment to take the road to the garita Belen in pursuit. In person he ascended to the castle to make observations and to collect his troops. All the volunteers of his division were there at the time, for when the South Carolinians had passed the wall, they marched up the main roadway, by the flank,\* and entered the castle by the main gate. When Quitman arrived the troops were forming, and, having given orders for those of his command to follow him, he descended to conduct the operations on the Belen road, where the pursuit had already commenced.

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While the attacks upon the castle of Chapultepec and the batteries on the Tacubaya road had been successfully executed, another engagement had taken place on the north of the inclosure. From the angle of Molino del Rey, Colonel Trousdale advanced with a section of artillery and a portion of the fourteenth regiment to within observing

\* Colonel Gladden's Testimony. Executive Document, No. 65, Senate, first Session of the thirtieth Congress, p. 137.

distance of the barricades near the eastern angle of the inclosure. The battalion of the eleventh, and the remaining section of Magruder's battery, were left to watch the movement of the enemy's cavalry.

The position to which Trousdale advanced was exposed to the fire of the castle from the semicircle on the north, which caused serious annoyance. Believing that he saw re-enforcements entering the castle, he determined to advance. Lieutenant Jackson was ordered to move forward with his guns, and a party of the fourteenth regiment to follow in support. Before the pieces were unlimbered, a heavy fire of cannon and musketry was opened from the barricades, besides that from the castle above. Under it, the horses of the pieces were nearly all killed and disabled, the drivers and cannoneers much cut up, and the supporting force was instantly checked. The soldiers found some shelter and held their ground; and, with great exertions, Jackson got one of his pieces from under the direct fire, and opened in reply to the enemy. With this the point was held until the castle was carried, and the Mexicans around the barricades commenced a retreat.

In the mean time, Trousdale had come forward to restore order, and had been twice severely wounded. Lieutenant-colonel Hébert joined the regiment from the angle of Molino del Rey; and when the enemy commenced his retreat, the troops advanced, seized the gun which had been served upon them, and turned it on the enemy.



The eleventh infantry, during this time, had driven back a party of cavalry which came down within range of its position. It fell back quickly before a volley, and the appearance of Worth's first brigade, the light battalion, and a section of Duncan's guns, which were moving along the front of Molino del Rey to take position for pursuit along the San Cosme road to the capital.

Worth arrived at the angle while the fire upon Jackson's section and the fourteenth regiment was continued and heavy. He ordered Captain Magruder to withdraw the pieces, and threw a portion of Garland's brigade to the left of the road, to take the barricades in flank. These troops came in as the enemy retreated, and the point was carried. This having been accomplished, the ditch was filled up, and the artillery and troops of the command were advanced along the designated route in pursuit.

During all these operations General Scott had been observing the progress of events from Tacubaya. When the castle had been carried, he came forward to that point. The great body of the troops was still there when he arrived, and, having made a reconnaissance from the azotea of the college, he issued his orders for their disposition. Clarke's brigade was to rejoin Worth; Cadwalader's to follow and support him; the fifteenth regiment was designated to form the garrison of Chapultepec; the ninth ordered to support Quitman; and heavy ordnance was ordered forward to the different com-

mands from the siege train. Having given these directions and seen the troops in motion, some time afterward he proceeded in person to the scene of Worth's operations.\*

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The routes from Chapultepec to the capital have been before mentioned; the most southerly, as running a little north of east, to the garita Belen, and the other, first north to the suburb of San Cosme, and there turning at right angles, continuing through that suburb to the garita of the same name. The defenses on these routes exterior to the garitas had been principally constructed during the armistice and the days immediately succeeding it. Being out of view until after the fall of Chapultepec, they were necessarily unknown to the American officers. Although they had been constructed on a general plan, for covering the intermediate ground as well as the direct approaches by the causeways, yet the manner of the attack was such as to render it necessary to refer only to the points of defense directly on the routes.

Both of these were by the side of the aqueducts, which, supported on arches of heavy masonry, afforded certain advantages both to assailant and defender.

After the fall of Chapultepec, the operations of the American army, which in the early part of the

\* General Scott's Report. Executive Document, No. 1, House of Representatives, first Session of the thirtieth Congress, p. 381.

day, had been directed to the attainment of that great object, became detached and directed upon different points. General Scott intended that the greatest force should be sent and employed on the route to San Cosme, while Quitman was to advance cautiously on that to Belen, and keep up a diversion.\* Quitman did not so understand it, but made a fierce attack, and the operations upon both routes became of a positive character.

The rifle regiment had already become engaged with the enemy at a battery about midway between Chapultepec and the garita Belen, when the main body of Quitman's command was in readiness to move forward from the batteries on the Tacubaya road. The forces had been detained about that point, engaged in replenishing ammunition, and in filling up the ditches to allow the passage of the artillery.

The troops which took the route to Belen were, besides Quitman's proper division, Smith's brigade, and portions of different corps, which, becoming detached in the confusion of the operations about Chapultepec, had been led thither in search of their colors or to join in the battle. Of these, the largest was the battalion of the sixth infantry, which had passed north of the rock of Chapultepec, and, being without orders, had taken that route with the advancing forces. Subsequently the ninth infantry joined under General Scott's orders, and

\* General Scott's Report. Executive Document, No. 1, House of Representatives, first Session of the thirtieth Congress, p. 382.



throughout the day Captain Drum's company of artillery served in this direction.

After the fall of Chapultepec, the Mexican forces had formed in the battery with which the rifles had become engaged. Strong corps were also posted on either flank, in and about works which connected with the angle of the San Cosme aqueduct on the north, and works on the Piedad road to the south. Drum had left his pieces beyond the ditches of the barricades on the Tacubaya road, and at first served a captured four pounder on the retreating Mexicans and the battery at which they made a stand. An eight-inch howitzer having been brought forward, it was opened in that direction, and the rifles, springing from arch to arch, gained points within range of the battery, whence they opened a sharp fire. The remaining troops of the command were coming forward when the enemy abandoned the point.

The fire of the howitzer had been highly effective, the rifles were pressing closer every instant, and at the moment Lieutenant-colonel Duncan opened two of his pieces on the flank of the position, within four hundred yards.\* Worth's column was at the time advancing along the San Cosme road ; and, seeing the state of things, and a route by which his artillery could get within range, that general had ordered the movement, which, executed with celerity, assisted in gaining the point.

\* General Worth's and Quitman's Reports. Executive Document, No. 1, House of Representatives, first Session of the thirtieth Congress, p. 392, 415.

Quitman's whole command having come up to the battery, he reorganized it for an attack upon the garita. The rifles and South Carolina troops were mingled in the advance, and, passing from arch to arch, approached the enemy's position at the batteries around the garita Belen. The remainder of the command followed in the same manner; but Captain Drum served the eight-inch howitzer and a sixteen pounder without shelter.

The enemy made a stout resistance, and sent showers of round shot, grape, and musketry down the road, which cut up the artillerymen, and told fearfully upon the infantry soldiers who did not keep within the arches. For annoying those who did, the enemy moved a large corps out on the Piedad road, within musket shot on the south, which opened a galling flank fire. The American artillery was turned quickly in that direction, and with a few well-directed discharges of canister, delivered through the arches, dispersed it. The advance on the garita was continued under the heavy fire of the enemy, which could be only effectively replied to by the artillery. The distance was, however, gradually lessened, the enemy gave way, and finally Quitman, coming to the front, ordered a direct advance upon the battery. It was carried with small loss at twenty minutes past one o'clock in the afternoon.

The Mexican troops retreated into the city, and Quitman's whole command was soon compactly up with the captured work. The rifles and South

Carolina regiment advanced along the aqueduct to within one hundred yards of the citadel, which was still silent. **Drum's** ammunition had been expended, but he advanced an eight pounder captured at the garita, and served it upon the retreating enemy. Further advance, however, was soon rendered impracticable.

Santa Anna, who had been engaged in preparing the defense of other points, came up with a heavy re-enforcement and made good the battle. Enraged at the bad defense which General Terres, the commander at the garita, had made, the president met him with bitter reproaches, and struck him in the face. He posted a large force of infantry and several guns in the batteries on the Paseo, a broad road running north from the garita Belen, re-enforced the citadel, and stationed infantry in the houses to its east. From these points a terrific fire of artillery and small arms was poured upon the American troops, under which but few attempts were made to advance.

The rifles and South Carolina regiment lay close behind the aqueduct; other troops lay under cover of the parapets of the captured work, and in the buildings of the garita, while the remainder kept in the arches to the rear. From the citadel and Paseo the artillery fire of the enemy was concentrated upon the garita, and the shot tore through the buildings every instant. In spite of the heavy fire, **Captain Drum** continued to serve his eight pounder. His men fell rapidly, and details had



been twice furnished to supply their places. As the ammunition of this gun too was expended, Drum fell mortally wounded. The piece was drawn back under cover of the parapet, but hardly was it sheltered before Lieutenant Benjamin and the first sergeant of the company fell stricken in like manner. Like their captain, these had been unsheltered during the advance throughout the afternoon.

Under the heavy shower of shot, shell, and musketry, it was in vain to advance, or even to attempt to bring up ammunition with which to recommence a reply. During the remainder of the afternoon the Americans about this point confined themselves to holding the captured positions. The enemy several times attempted sallies from the citadel and houses, and made demonstrations of attacking the right flank; but his parties were generally small, and were at once driven back by the fire of the infantry and riflemen posted in that direction. Two companies of infantry were thrown out to a small work on the left, which had been abandoned, to protect that flank. The main body of the American troops remained about the garita and in and behind the arches of the aqueduct until nightfall. Then the Mexican fire ceased.

General Worth was re-enforced by three squadrons of dragoons soon after the fall of Chapultepec and the barricades on the northern road. His command steadily followed the retreating Mexicans along the route by the aqueduct of San Cosme,

until it was halted to allow the fire of Duncan's guns to favor Quitman's advance.

During the halt Captain Magruder brought up his battery, and, supposing other American troops to be in advance, he proceeded on until he found himself in presence of the enemy, posted in strong force in and about a work at the angle of the aqueduct. He was unsupported except by a command made up of scattered detachments, in all numbering about sixty, which had become separated from their corps and wandered in this direction. The enemy several times issued from his works with an apparent intention of seizing the battery, but soon fell back before the fire of the guns.\*

The second brigade had meanwhile rejoined Worth's division, and the advance in force was continued. Magruder's battery was drawn back, masked by the dragoons. Garland threw out detachments from the second artillery and fourth infantry, under Captain Brooks and Lieutenant Grant, to the left, while another, under Lieutenant Gore, advanced direct upon the enemy's work. The assailants were few, but, nevertheless, after a short conflict, the enemy retired into the suburb. The American parties pursued him rapidly along the aqueduct until they gained a barricade midway between the captured work and the garita of San Cosme. From this point, however, they were with-

\* Captain Magruder's Report. Executive Document, No. 1, House of Representatives, first Session of the thirtieth Congress, Appendix to the Report of the Secretary of War, p. 195.

drawn, for the breaking up of the corps, and the confusion incident to the quick pursuit of the victory, had rendered a reorganization necessary.

The main strength of Worth's division had come up to the vicinity of the captured work. Two of Magruder's guns were located at embrasures looking along the main street of the suburb, and the two remaining on the west looking to the road from Tacubaya. While the scattered parties were being collected, Cadwalader, having reunited his brigade, came up to the position.

During this halt, the enemy having brought up artillery which had been withdrawn from the garita San Antonio, reoccupied the barricade previously taken and abandoned by the Americans. Thence, as well as from the houses in the vicinity, he kept up a lively fire; but a slight angle in the aqueduct, some distance in advance, gave shelter to many troops, and the remainder were posted behind the houses.

General Scott arrived soon after Worth was ready for the advance. The points of the enemy's position had been discovered by a reconnaissance made during the halt. Worth was ordered to push on, to carry the garita, and, if possible, to penetrate before dark to the Alameda. Cadwalader's brigade was left to hold the captured work at the angle of the aqueduct. Worth advanced his whole division along the road under shelter of the angle in his front.

Upon reaching that point, further direct advance



was exceedingly difficult, if not impracticable. The Mexicans served a gun and howitzer from behind the first barricade with great rapidity, and sent showers of musketry from the house-tops. Under these circumstances, Worth ordered Garland's brigade through the aqueduct into the buildings on the right, and Clarke's into those on the left of the road. Both corps quickly took possession of the houses, and commenced making their way through them to the front. The Mexicans held on to the barricade until a mountain howitzer from the roof of one of the occupied houses opened upon them, when they quickly withdrew their pieces into the battery at the garita, around which their principal force was stationed.

During the occurrence of these events several pieces of heavy caliber had been advanced to the work held by Cadwalader, but so constant was the enemy's fire along the street of the suburb that no opportunity was afforded for locating them.

The barricade having been abandoned, the American advance was continued on either side of the aqueduct, through and over the houses. A depôt of engineer tools having been captured, material for this kind of movement was afforded, and, though necessarily slow, it was continuous. Two mountain howitzers, one located on the azotea of the Church of San Cosme on the right, and one on that of a commanding building on the left, were kept in lively play upon the garita.

But the Mexicans would not easily yield. Hav-

ing made the dispositions around the citadel and the garita Belen, which had checked Quitman, Santa Anna had come up to San Cosme, and his troops fought well. The assailants were, however, working their way on either side of his point of defense, and from windows and roofs were pouring a stream of musketry and canister with accurate aim. By five o'clock in the afternoon they were nearly up with the houses about the garita, and Worth ordered a light gun to be advanced to the barricade in its front.

Lieutenant Hunt, of Duncan's battery, took it forward at a gallop, under a fire which killed and wounded five out of nine men, and the piece was served upon the enemy through the embrasure of the barricade.

Toward night the troops had all approximated to the garita, and though, from the nature of the operations, the corps were much scattered, yet all were waiting the signal for the advance. Captain M'Kenzie, whose storming party had rejoined its division, and been in the front during the operations of the afternoon, being nearest the position of the enemy, advanced upon it with his party. His movement was quickly supported by all the different corps engaged in the vicinity, and the garita was quickly carried. The enemy, much cut up by the American fire, made but short resistance. He retreated and carried off one of his cannon. The other was seized by the assailants, and served upon the retiring parties until they were out of range.

Worth fixed his head-quarters for the night at a house some hundred yards from the garita. His troops were posted about it, and in rear as far as the angle of the aqueduct.

When the general-in-chief had arrived at the scene of action, he had ordered the three squadrons of dragoons which had accompanied Worth in his advance to return to Tacubaya for the defense of that point. After Worth had advanced in execution of his orders, he returned in person to the vicinity of Chapultepec, whence he ordered the troops, still under Twiggs's command at Piedad, to join those engaged in the city.\* Riley's brigade was sent to report to Worth, and Steptoe's battery to rejoin Quitman's division; but these troops did not arrive at their destinations until some time after dark.

The demonstration from the Niño Perdido road had been kept up until after the fall of Chapultepec. As the greater number of the guns had been withdrawn from the enemy's lines soon after that event, the cannonade ceased on both sides.

During the night, General Quitman's command was engaged in the construction of epaulements for a heavy battery. Before dawn they were completed, and one twenty-four, one eighteen pounder, and one eight-inch siege howitzer, with a full supply of ammunition for all, were in position. The new battery was under Captain Steptoe,

\* General Scott's Report. Executive Document, No. 1, House of Representatives, first Session of the thirtieth Congress, p. 382.



who had left his twelve pounders in reserve to the rear.

General Worth, being within the city, ordered Captain Huger to place a twenty-four pounder and a ten-inch mortar in battery near his head-quarters soon after dark. At nine o'clock they opened in the direction of the Plaza. But few shot or shell were fired; but the demonstration of a bombardment had the desired effect.

A council of Mexican general officers was setting at the time in the citadel, and it was determined to withdraw the beaten army, and give up the capital to the conquerors without further struggle. The determination was executed with as much celerity as possible. Many soldiers, however, deserted in the confusion; and care was taken, before leaving, to liberate all the convicts in the city prisons. The object of this was, that they should assist in a mode of warfare determined upon and set forth in a proclamation soon after negotiations were broken off. Preparations had been made for it by arming the lowest class of the population, and covering the azoteas with the paving stones of the torn-up pavements of the different streets.

As many pieces of artillery as could be transported were taken with the retreating army. None were removed from the citadel, as it was in close vicinity to the American position, and the removal might have given the alarm. By one o'clock on the morning of the 14th, the Mexican army, as a

body, had left the capital, and taken the northern road to Guadalupe Hidalgo.

At the same hour a deputation from the Ayuntamiento to the American general-in-chief presented itself at Worth's head-quarters near the garita San Cosme. It was sent under an escort to Tacubaya, where General Scott received it at about four o'clock.

At the interview, the deputation requested terms of capitulation in favor of the Church, the citizens, and the civil authorities. General Scott promptly refused to sign any capitulation, inasmuch as the city had been virtually in his possession from the time of the lodgments of the preceding day; and he declared that his army should come under no terms not self-imposed.\* With an answer to such effect, the deputation returned to the city.

Worth pushed forward his reconnoitering parties early on the morning of the 14th. At five o'clock his main body advanced as far as the Alameda, where, in obedience to General Scott's orders, he halted to await further instructions.

At dawn of day Quitman received a white flag from the citadel, with the information that the place had been abandoned. He immediately took possession of it, and placed a regiment in garrison. The remainder of his command marched to the Plaza and occupied the palace.

When the capital had been evacuated by the

\* General Scott's Report. Executive Document, No. 1, House of Representatives, first Session of the thirtieth Congress, p. 383.

Mexican army, a gang of thieves and leperos had entered the public buildings. At the time of Quitman's arrival they were engaged in plundering, but were soon cleared out, and order was apparently restored in that quarter.

General Scott soon after entered the city, and established his head-quarters temporarily in the palace. For some hours all things were quiet about the town; but when the different corps had dispersed to take quarters, the liberated convicts and disbanded soldiers commenced a straggling fire from the house-tops, which caused serious annoyance. The Ayuntamiento was immediately called upon to take measures for checking this kind of warfare, and the troops were at once vigorously employed against those engaged in it.

The streets were swept with grape and canister, and the heavy guns were turned upon the houses whence the fire proceeded. Each of them was given up to plunder, and the soldiers were ordered to spare none found within them. They were plundered, but the soldiers would not execute the latter part of the order in full. But, except these designated houses, none were robbed, and, in general, the soldiers committed no outrages—certainly none in comparison with that which might have been expected under the existing circumstances.

It was not until the morning of the 15th that the disturbance was finally checked, and, meanwhile, several officers and soldiers of the army had been killed and wounded. On that day the city



became quiet, order was in a great measure restored, and the troops were quartered in the different parts of the town. Hospitals were established, and the comfort and care of the sick and wounded were at last attended to in a manner.

On the 14th, 16th, 17th, and 18th, General Scott issued stringent orders, requiring the observance of strict discipline on the part of his soldiers, and prescribing the limit to the occupation of quarters. By that of the 17th, a contribution of \$150,000 was imposed upon the capital. The method of its expenditure, for the benefit of the sick and wounded of the army, and for replacing the lost and damaged clothing, was established.\* The amount was to be collected by the Ayuntamiento, and paid in four weekly installments. Saving this small amount, no other contribution was levied upon the city of Mexico at that time.

The strength of the American force which was in the field during these final operations, which resulted in the fall of the Mexican capital, including the storming of Chapultepec, of the batteries on the Tacubaya road, and the advance on and capture of the works on the causeways of San Cosme and Belen, did not exceed, in the aggregate, 6800 men. The various losses which had occurred in the different preceding actions, the increase of the sick list, and the necessary garrison for the depôt at Mixcoac, had reduced the force which orig-

\* General Orders, Nos. 284, 286, 287, and 289. Executive Document, No. 1, House of Representatives, first Session of the thirtieth Congress, p. 386-390.

inally marched from Puebla, but 10,738 strong of all arms, to that number. From the nature of the operations, not more than one third of the numbers upon the field had been employed directly on one point at the same time. At all of them the defenders were greatly superior, besides having the advantage of position.

The great dependence of the Mexicans had been upon the Castle of Chapultepec, strong, and strongly situated as it was, and many had believed that it was impregnable. The anticipation was cherished, that if the American army failed in the assault upon it, it would retreat from the valley, and that the glory of successful defense would belong to Mexico. But when Chapultepec fell before the vigorous assault, the moral as well as physical effect of the capture opened the way for the entrance into the capital. All the confidence, all the prestige of victory which had belonged to the American army, was at once restored; the hook upon which hung the hope of Mexico was broken, and with it what moral force remained to the mass of her defenders.

Twelve officers, including, besides those who have been mentioned, Captain Van Olinda, of the New York troops, Lieutenants Sidney Smith, of the fourth infantry, and Cantey and Moragne, of the South Carolina regiment, fell under mortal wounds, and sixty-six others were stricken during the continuance of the operations. One hundred and twenty soldiers killed, and six hundred and sixty-five

wounded, made the aggregate of the loss of the army eight hundred and sixty-three.\*

That so small a force, bravely led, should, under any circumstances, have captured the strong points of Mexican defense, and penetrated the capital, would have been cause of wonder and admiration, even with the brilliant and successful deeds of the army throughout the war, and those of the 19th and 20th of August in fresh remembrance.

Effected as the last conquests were after vexatious delays, and the consequent abandonment of all previously-gained advantages, and against the strongest points of the Mexican lines, and these fortified during the delay, the deeds speak trumpet-tongued in praise of the bravery of the troops and of their gallant leading. All remark, all comment, all verbal praise on these subjects is unnecessary. None can deny that better troops or braver officers have seldom or never shown their prowess to the world than those who stormed Chapultepec, and, through it, the capital of Mexico. The dispositions and details of the operations may perhaps be criticised, but the astonishing success silences cavil or complaint concerning the conduct of the troops or the execution of the attacks, either from enemies or those who would judge impartially.

\* Return of Killed and Wounded. Executive Document, No. 1, House of Representatives, first Session of the thirtieth Congress, p. 470.



## CHAPTER XIV.

OBSERVATIONS—Agreement to the Armistice—The Battle of Molino del Rey—Events and Dispositions between the 8th and 12th of September—The Storming of Chapultepec—The Attacks on the Garitas of Belen and San Cosme—Reflections.

THE operations of the American army during the interval between the 7th and the 14th of September, in which it lost 1652 men and officers in killed and wounded, were the result of the armistice. They were the immediate consequence of the failure of the negotiations which Mr. Trist carried on during its continuance. The ultimate object of the operations was the capture of the city of Mexico, and, in effect, that object had been gained by the battles of Contreras and Churubusco. This fact was admitted by the Mexican commissioners for the convention, believed in by the intelligent neutrals of the British embassy, the conquest was claimed by the American general-in-chief in his official report, and was apparent to all who were present and witnessed the existing state of affairs. The narrative of the operations has been brought to the attainment of the object, to the capture of the enemy's capital, and the cause and its effects may be subjects for observation. The first of these is the agreement to the armistice.

1. *"Should continued success attend your operations, you may, some time before, be met by a proposition to treat for peace, with an intermediate arm-*

*istice. No such proposition will be entertained by you without your being first satisfied that it is made in good faith, and without your being in possession, or being put by stipulation in possession, of such commanding positions as will insure good faith on the part of the enemy.”\**

2. *“The department need not fear that I shall, early or late, consent to any truce without placing the United States upon a safe footing for negotiations.”†*

The first of these extracts is from a letter of General Scott to General Taylor of the 12th of June, 1846, giving instructions for the guidance of the latter general, and the second from his letter to the Secretary of War of the 11th of April, 1846. In both, a full guarantee of the good faith of the enemy appears to have been considered by the general-in-chief as requisite to the agreement to an armistice. Certainly military prudence and propriety demanded no less; for, when the attempt is made to conquer a peace by force of arms after diplomacy has failed, it is an evident truth that the object is not to be obtained by sacrificing military advantages, which, if pursued, must force the enemy to accede to the terms proposed, or to experience great losses.

And yet General Scott's course of action, in agreeing to the armistice of the 24th of August, was precisely contrary to that which he had laid down for his subordinate, and which he announced

\* Executive Document, No. 60, House of Representatives, first Session of the thirtieth Congress, p. 326.

† Idem, p. 926.



as that which he should pursue. With a small army he had marched upon a perilous expedition, had necessarily abandoned his communications in the course of the operations, had conquered his enemy by a wonderful combination of fortunate circumstances, aided by the gallant conduct of his army. Had the victory been pursued and Mexico been taken, his position would have been safe. Had any point been acquired which would have insured the speedy conquest of the capital in case of the failure of negotiations, then the conditions which the general-in-chief had before prescribed as necessary before such an arrangement should be made would have been fulfilled. In that case the negotiation might with all prudence have been entered upon with the hope of good results. But nothing was gained which might serve as a guarantee, and nothing was strenuously demanded at the time when General Scott was in such position that he could demand it.

The claim for the surrender of the Castle of Chapultepec, indirectly set forth, was abandoned; not for any military reason, although at that time Chapultepec was not considered as of any great importance by the general-in-chief. It was abandoned, as it was said, to soothe the national pride of Mexico, which would not permit the negotiation of a treaty without this gratification. That the negotiation was impossible without it was the declaration of British officials and Mexican leaders. That it was impossible with it is evidenced by the facts,



and the result of the negotiations carried on during the continuance of the convention.

Sacrifices to Mexican pride had been made throughout this whole war; but of all the sacrifices, none had been so dangerous to the American army, the honor of the country, or the success of the cause as this. The army was the first thing compromised in the case of the failure of the negotiations, or of a subsequent attack upon the capital, and with it all else.

For it, retreat was out of the question. It was difficult in itself, still more difficult from the nature of the country and the routes, and a hospital of over a thousand sick and wounded soldiers forbade any thing like the attempt; for, with Mexican enemies, elated by the success of their intrigue, if not of their arms, the fate of the wounded, if left behind, would soon have been accomplished; that of the main army would hardly have been problematical. Nothing could in reason have been anticipated but for the American forces to take the city of Mexico or to perish in the attempt. They did take it in the event, and proved that, in the bravery and efficiency of his troops, the American general had one guarantee which did not fail him. But the splendor of the victory achieved under so many disadvantages, although that victory counteracted the effect of the armistice upon the ultimate success of the cause of the United States, and added to the glory of the American arms, can not cover up the facts that the armistice was entered

into, that both of these were placed in jeopardy, and that for the capture of the city of Mexico, which was at the time in the power of the assailants, the blood of 1652 gallant men was subsequently required.

The various reasons which may have presented themselves to General Scott have been noticed heretofore. The desire of the American government and people for peace certainly was a reason in favor of putting forth most strenuous exertions to obtain it. But it can not be quoted as a reason for endangering the army upon so doubtful a point in the pursuit of the object, and with the army, the prospects of ever obtaining peace upon advantageous terms.

The coincidence existing between the terms suggested, and in a manner agreed upon, in the correspondence which took place while the American army remained at Puebla, and those actually concluded at Tacubaya, proves that General Scott did not enter into the measure without consideration, and also that he put faith in the representations of Santa Anna. Whether he would have done so had they not been backed by the counsel of the British minister and those connected with his embassy, is very doubtful; but even with that counsel, the very nature of the final proposition, which required him to give up all the advantages of the victory, and to take all the risks of defeat, was sufficient to have demonstrated the danger, and prevented the assumption of so great a responsibility.

The scheme was successful, so far as Santa Anna *actually* promised that it should be, for negotiations were entered upon; but they failed, and left the American army and arms in a far worse condition than if they had never been opened.

Santa Anna was allowed to choose between the chance of personal profit by the conclusion of the war, or of probably gaining a victory and a perpetuation of power by the renewal of hostilities. Circumstances, and, notwithstanding the asserted belief of American functionaries, probably his own inclinations, induced him to choose the latter, and, as has been seen, he did not hesitate to violate his engagements with his confiding adversary in order to secure himself, after his course of action had been once determined upon.

Different opinions have been expressed in relation to this measure. By some it has been regarded as a display of magnanimity, and the voluntary assumption of grave responsibility in the pursuit of the ends of the war. By others it has been considered as a measure undertaken for political aggrandizement, and the result of a short-sighted infatuation, which led to misplaced confidence in the faith of a man noted for his bad faith in politics, and almost without an equal in the intrigues of diplomacy. Whichever of these opinions is correct, the measure was unsuccessful, and therefore most unfortunate for the principal actors upon the American side, as well as for the army.

The responsibility of it must rest with General



Scott. In his own language, made use of at a time when the army was in a situation far less dangerous than when in rear of the city of Mexico, with that capital, a large army, and near three hundred miles of country between it and its base of operations, "*the question of an armistice or no armistice is most peculiarly a military question, appertaining of necessity, if not of universal right, in the absence of direct instructions, to the commander of the invading forces.*"\* The evident truth contained in the above was asserted when it was, for the purpose of disputing the power which it was supposed Mr. Trist was attempting to arrogate to himself. The basis for the opinion was the paramount importance of the safety of the army. If it were a correct one at Jalapa on the 7th of May, it was no less so at Tacubaya on the 24th of August. It would seem that if the same opinion had been entertained, and reference had been made to his former letters for the necessary steps to secure the safety of the army, they would have backed the representations of Worth and Pillow with General Scott, and saved a portion, if not all, of the loss incident to the operations which took place between the 7th and 14th of September.

Nothing can be found in the dispatches from Washington to justify a belief that any such convention as that agreed upon at Tacubaya had ever been contemplated or authorized by the executive

\* General Scott to Mr. Trist. Executive Document, No. 60, House of Representatives, first Session of the thirtieth Congress, p. 960.

of the United States. On the contrary, the contingency upon which an armistice was to be granted was declared to be the definite conclusion and ratification of peace.\* Moreover, the disapprobation which had been expressed of the convention of Monterey, agreed to by General Taylor when not so much hazard of disaster was incurred, might have told how such an armistice as that of Tacubaya would have been received. The matter was never directly commented upon by the authorities at Washington, and for the probable reason that the news of it, and of the final assault and capture of the city of Mexico, reached them at nearly the same time. The error was for a space lost sight of in the splendor of the military achievements of the army which immediately preceded it, and of those which were its atonement. As the great military operations of the war were finished with those achievements, in the natural dislike which all governments, and especially republican governments, have for censuring a general made popular by the glorious success of his army, the agreement to this convention was passed over. But that it was overlooked by the authorities at Washington does not detract from the facts of the case, nor even give it the sanction of the executive. Nor would such sanction be of any avail. The armistice must rest upon its own merits in the judgment of history, and the responsibility must rest upon the proper

\* Mr. Marcy to General Scott. Executive Document, No. 60, House of Representatives, first Session of the thirtieth Congress, p. 962.

authors of it; and when it is said that it was ill judged and unfortunate, let those who fought in the subsequent actions testify whether the opinion is erroneous.

*The battle of Molino del Rey.*

Upon partial information, and in spite of the contradictions which have been mentioned in the narrative, General Scott ordered the execution of this battle for the purpose of capturing and destroying a foundry supposed to exist within the range of buildings. It was, however, intended to be a partial operation, and only commensurate with the supposed importance of the object to be gained. The idea that it would prove to be such an operation might very well have been entertained, so long as it was understood that the foundry was defended only by a small force, and that the intention of attack was kept secret from the enemy. But how it could have been believed that such a position as Molino del Rey could be assaulted in the night, carried, the machinery broken up, and that the attacking force could retire into Tacubaya before morning, having suffered a loss of not more than twenty men, is indeed inexplicable; for it is made to appear that the fact of the Mexican troops taking up position was one reason for ordering the attack;\* and before it was executed, certainly, it was well known that the enemy's position was strong, and strongly fortified.

\* General Scott's Official Report. Executive Document, No. 1, Senate, first Session of the thirtieth Congress, p. 355.



Whoever the persons were who brought General Scott the information concerning the reputed foundery on the night of September 6th, whether intelligent neutrals or spies in General Scott's employ, the information was false. The fact that Santa Anna commenced moving his troops to the field on the morning of the 7th would indicate that he knew that the attack would be made at that point; and the care which had been taken to select the position, and to throw up fortifications, would show that he had had the occurrence for some time under consideration. In all probability, the Mexican president caused the information which induced the American general to order the attack; for, if he did not, and had no reason to believe that it would be made at Molino del Rey, why did he move so large a force to the very strongest point of his lines, and that most distant from the city, when the positions about the garita of San Antonio were comparatively undefended? It is not probable that the movement could have been intended to threaten Tacubaya, for an attack by Mexican troops upon such a force as Worth's division alone, in good defensive position, would hardly have been attempted. Moreover, in such case, the defenses prepared about Molino del Rey would have been unnecessary.

If Santa Anna really did bring about the operation by causing false information to be conveyed to the American general, it is but another instance where his skillful intrigue caused a course to be

adopted by his adversary which relinquished every advantage, and in which, according to all probability, he should have been defeated. If he did not, then the conception of the attack, made as it was, must attach to General Scott, and the facts speak for themselves whether the movement was well judged or not.

It might very well have been deemed proper, in consideration of the great strength of the Mexican force, and its proximity to the American lines, to have struck a powerful blow, which would have at once crushed a large portion of the defending army, and, by pursuing the victory, to have carried the strong point of the western lines, the Castle of Chapultepec. Such was Worth's opinion, and, as the attack was made, it was doubtless the proper one. Something would then have been gained by the operation, and the American army would have been at least one step nearer the capital. But a general battle like that should have been fought with the whole disposable force of the army, and not with three small brigades, seven light and two heavy pieces of artillery, while the nearest troops to be depended upon for re-enforcement were at the distance of three miles from the field, and the most distant at least ten, at San Augustin.

It may be said that it was necessary to leave troops to watch the other portions of the line. Pierce's and Riley's brigades were advanced in the direction of the left, and, as they were, it would appear that they were sufficient for the purpose ;

especially as they were withdrawn thence during the action by General Pillow, and ordered to the field by General Scott. Smith's brigade and Quitman's division were left in idleness at San Angel and San Augustin. The only reason which can be assigned for their inactivity is to be found in the very mistaken ideas entertained of the undertaking, for it was perfectly practicable for them to have been upon the field. If it was not, the battle should not have been commenced until it was.

The object for which the battle was fought was not commensurate with the importance of the movement, as it proved, or the effort which would have been required for success in any case. A little reflection upon the mechanical process of gun casting might have sufficed to show it. It is slow in the best of founderies, and it was well known that that at Molino del Rey, or any other in Mexico, did not stand in any such category. The American army was provisioned for twenty days, and was not large enough to detach any very considerable force on foraging expeditions to increase the supply; wherefore, if the capital of Mexico did fall, it was to fall in that period. Under the supposition that twenty guns (certainly a large estimate) had been finished and located in battery, can it be believed that such an increase of Mexican armament could have caused such a loss as did befall the American troops at Molino del Rey, and they not have been in possession of some key, some approach to the capital? If so, let reference



be made to the armament, and the returns of killed and wounded of Monterey, of Cerro Gordo, of Contreras, and Churubusco.

Nothing was here intended by the general-in-chief except the destruction of a foundery which had not even existence, and which, if it had, could have been effectually stopped by the simple operation of cutting off the water; an operation attended with no danger, and not half an hour's labor. The approach to the city in any contingency, or the seizure of any permanent advantage, was not intended; nay, it was positively forbidden to the general who conducted the immediate operation upon the field.

The conduct of the battle has been severely censured by both military men and civilians, and in many cases the censure has fallen heavily upon the general who immediately directed the troops engaged. That it has been censured shows that its result was not satisfactory, and that a great loss was encountered without any apparent advantage commensurate with it; but it does not prove that General Worth, whose duty it was to execute the order, failed either in skillful disposition or brilliant execution.

Let it be remembered that he was to attack a Mexican force immensely superior in numbers, posted in line in the form of a re-entering angle; that the flanks of this line rested upon heavy buildings strongly fortified, with the right flank farther protected by a ravine and Alvarez's strong numerical

force, and the left by the inclosures and Castle of Chapultepec; that the Mexican artillery was posted in the angle whence it could sweep all approaches from the front, and that the whole field of operations was under the fire of the castle; that the attack was not to be an operation where the general could take time to use his artillery, necessary to reduce the strong positions, but that the very nature of the orders required that the victory should be the speedy result of a sudden attack; and, moreover, that the force with which it was to be accomplished amounted in the aggregate, of officers and soldiers, of the staff, of artillery, cavalry, and infantry, to but 3447, and that the work was accomplished at all will be sufficient to show good conduct on the part of the troops and their commander.

The principal objection which has been urged against General Worth's dispositions, and that, too, by friends of the general-in-chief, is that he ordered an attack by infantry upon the positions, when artillery would have reduced them without direct assault, or have rendered their conquest an easy matter.\* Had it not been that the nature of the orders forbade an attack by artillery, such an objection would have been well founded. But light six pounders are not the guns with which to reduce heavy fortified buildings, and two twenty-four pounders would have required more time for the work than was anticipated or allowed.

\* Lieutenant-colonel Hitchcock's Letter to Courier and Inquirer. Executive Document, No. 65, Senate, first Session of the thirtieth Congress, p. 527.

As for the infantry assault, it was made in a manner which promised success as strongly as any other. The nature of the Mexican position forbade the concentration of the whole force upon one point to the neglect of others, except that effected by the attacks of the storming party and Garland's column. These, made as they were, supported each other, and concentrated the greatest force upon Molino del Rey, while a force was left to engage the other portions of the line.

The movements in support of the battle after its commencement were simple, but they were made at the proper time and at the proper place. I speak of the advance of the light battalion and of Cadwalader's troops to the support of the storming party as it fell back, of the junction with Garland's column, and of Lieutenant-colonel Duncan's prompt movement to the left against Alvarez, and his subsequent fire upon Casa Mata.

As for the conduct of the officers and troops, and the management of the artillery, under the heavy fire about Molino del Rey, it was as glorious as ever displayed on any field. It was confused, it is true, but storming is always a work of confusion, and after it is once entered into, bravery, discipline, and perseverance must do the work. The genius of the general, unless seconded by them, can do but little at such period of the battle.

Whatever may be said of the execution of the attack, the nature of the action proved conclusively that it was exceedingly fortunate that, at Worth's



representation, the time of assault had been postponed from the night until the dawn of day. It would hardly have been possible to have surprised the Mexican army in such force as it was—certainly not if the attack were anticipated by Santa Anna. Unknown as the intricacies of Molino del Rey were to the assailants, had the attack been made in the night, darkness and confusion in the commencement of the battle would have been added to the other difficulties to be overcome. In that case, close as the battle proved to be without them, it would in all probability have resulted in a disastrous defeat instead of an unprofitable victory.

Pillow's movement to the field from San Borja and Nalvarte was unauthorized, although General Scott ordered it about the time it was commenced. Nevertheless, it was perfectly proper under the circumstances, which were apparent to him at the moment, and he arrived on the field in time to pursue a victory, had such been General Scott's intention. There is but little doubt that his fresh troops, supported by Worth's, could have carried Chapultepec at once. The moral effect of the beating which the Mexican troops had received could not have been other than dispiriting at the moment, and one more vigorous push would have gained an advantage worth the battle.

But the advance was forbidden, and a retreat from the field ordered; an operation injurious to the moral force of the American troops, and which relinquished whatever advantage had been gained

by the victory. The field of battle was given up to the enemy if he chose to occupy it, which showed that, at the time, it was believed that the battle had been somewhat useless; for the foundery had no existence, and if the field of battle had been worth fighting for, for the furtherance of future operations, certainly it was worth holding.

To end the operations of the day, two regiments were sent down to Molino del Rey to cover the retreat of victorious troops; for what purpose, unless to give the victory as much the semblance of a retreat as possible, it is difficult to imagine.

The result of this battle could not have increased the confidence of the Mexican troops in an encounter with their enemy upon any ordinarily fortified position. To the extent of a severe blow upon the enemy at the recommencement of hostilities, it was doubtless beneficial to the American cause; but it was more than counterbalanced by the moral effect of it upon the American troops.

The abandonment of the field had the effect of causing the Mexicans to believe that the Castle of Chapultepec was stronger than perhaps it was in reality, for under no other supposition could they account for the fact that the victory was not pursued. This may have been of ultimate advantage to the Americans in the course which was finally adopted, but its immediate consequence was the concentration of the main Mexican force on the southern front of the city, which General Scott at the time intended to attack, and the completion of the

strong lines of defense in that quarter. If its ultimate consequence were the abandonment of Molino del Rey by the enemy, it was an advantage, for the approach to Chapultepec lay through that range of buildings; but the advantage was a hypothetical one, which none could have foreseen at the time. Certainly General Scott did not foresee that, in the event of attacking Chapultepec, Molino del Rey would be found unoccupied; for he troubled himself no more about it until the 11th of September, and then it was a question whether the enemy had not possession of it. He certainly might have had, had he felt inclined.

It is almost needless to quote military authorities upon the orders given by the general-in-chief for the battle of Molino del Rey. Were all quoted in full which they contravened, they would swell a volume. No military writer can be found who recommends an attack upon an enemy's strongest point by a force but half of that which is unquestionably disposable, especially when his numbers are in themselves greatly superior. But one maxim of Napoleon's, sound as all of that great man's, appears to be peculiarly appropriate to the case, and of which all the provisions were violated.

*"It is an approved maxim in war never to do what the enemy wishes you to do, for this reason alone, that he desires it. A field of battle, therefore, which he has previously studied and reconnoitered, should be avoided, and double care should be taken where he has had time to fortify and intrench. One*



*consequence deducible from this maxim is, never to attack a position in front which you can gain by turning."*

Here the attack was made at the point desired by Santa Anna, on positions perfectly known to his officers, fortified and intrenched; and that, too, not in full force, not with any great end in view, but with a small command, and in pursuit of a fancied object not worth one tenth of the loss which was suffered, and not worth one particle of the risk which was incurred. Moreover, had the American army attacked on the south front of the city, comparatively unfortified at that time, Chapultepec, Molino del Rey, and all other positions on the west would have been turned. If the capital were gained, the communications would have been re-established, and those points of defense would have fallen by their own weight.

*"Show me the man who has committed no faults in war,"* says Turenne, *"and he will be one who has seldom made war :"* a truth which should always be remembered when military operations are criticised; for, truly, the task of commanding an army is great enough to entitle the officer to all the glory which may be awarded to successful disposition. But when a general, after a series of most hazardous operations, which have resulted in almost complete success, abandons all military advantages in the hope of gaining a doubtful political point, and, having lost that point, takes the first step to recover himself by attacking his enemy's

strongest position in small force—small not only in comparison with that of the enemy (for that was in keeping with the whole course of action throughout the war), but small in comparison with that which was disposable; and then, when the victory has been gained at great sacrifices, and against all probability, he refuses to pursue his advantages, and even falls back at once from the field, certainly his operations may justly be the subject of remark.

But the battle was finished, the troops were withdrawn from the field, and, with the acquisition of some 632 prisoners and three pieces of artillery, and with his own force diminished by 784 of the flower of his army, the American general-in-chief found himself in precisely the same situation which he occupied in the morning. The problem of the capture of the Mexican capital was still open for solution.

*Events and dispositions between the 8th and 12th of September.*

On the 7th, the American general-in-chief hoped that the reconnaissances of his officers would prove that the approaches on the southern front of Mexico were more favorable than the approach by Chapultepec.\* The hope was founded upon the general knowledge of the ground, as derived from ordinary maps and from the people of the country. No reconnaissances had been made in that direction

\* General Scott's Official Report. Executive Document, No. 1, Senate, first Session of the thirtieth Congress, p. 355.

during the armistice, and none before the occurrence of the battle of the 8th. On the evening of that day one was pushed in that direction, and the commencement of a line of fortifications was discovered, as well as a partial armament ; but as the enemy occupied a position on the road of El Niño Perdido, a close reconnoissance could not be made, and no full information was obtained at the time.

When Piedad was occupied by the troops of Pillow's command on the morning of the 9th, and the Mexican pickets retired from their position at the hermitage, at the angle of the cross-road with that of Niño Perdido, the whole position was open to observation. And certainly, if the American general had been able, or had felt inclined to attack, his hopes as to the eligibility of the approaches by the south front were realized. The obstacles were but two ditches, both passable for infantry, the unfinished line of fortifications, and the ground between the American outposts and the capital was practicable for infantry, as was proved by the presence of the Mexican troops upon it. But two guns could bear upon the approaches from the hermitage at the time. The question whether the approach by the south front, over such ground and partial defenses, was more eligible than to attack and carry the Castle of Chapultepec and the works intermediate to the city, which might well have been supposed, although they were not known to exist, and, finally, the citadel, was at the moment one of easy solution. It was especially so, inasmuch as



on the previous day every advantage which had been acquired for the attack on Chapultepec had been relinquished, and that work was in as good a condition for defense as it had ever been.

A short cannonade from heavy guns on the Niño Perdido road at the hermitage would have effectually stopped the work upon the intrenchments, and have shaken the covering Mexican forces. It need have lasted no longer than the time in which American working parties were employed in bridging the ditches, and Quitman's and Twiggs's troops were marching from Coyacan and San Angel to the field. An attack then made with vigor would have carried the line, and the city must have been open to assault through the suburb of San Antonio. From the suburb the streets could have been swept to the palace, and the result of the combat was by no means problematical, if the American troops behaved with any thing like their ordinary conduct.

The heavy guns of the army were at Mixcoac, two miles and a half from Piedad, and if action had been immediately taken, the only delay which would have been actually necessary was that required to place them in position. This view of the case presented itself forcibly to those who first occupied the hermitage, and hence the messages sent by Pillow to the general-in-chief to inform him of the existing state of things, and to request his personal examination of the ground.

General Scott did not order an attack at the time, and various reasons have been urged for his want

of action. On that day he said that he was not going to fight a battle on ground chosen by the enemy;\* a wise determination, and one which it was to be regretted had not been earlier arrived at.

But the lines of San Antonio were not the positions which the enemy had chosen. They were points which he was necessarily forced to defend since the American army had fallen back from Molino del Rey, and abandoned that route of attack for the time, unless, indeed, he was to give up the defense altogether. As they were the weakest points in the whole circumference of the city accessible to the American army, they were most naturally presented for its attack, wherefore Santa Anna was obliged to occupy them in strength. Nevertheless, numerically strong as he was, it can hardly be believed that he desired to receive battle at that point, while his fortifications were unfinished and his artillery out of position. If so, and if he were prepared at the time, why were his fortifications so diligently continued?

To have attacked and carried the point with ease, it was necessary to move upon it rapidly and in force. Unfortunately, here, where reconnaissance was perfectly practicable, and where the whole field was open for observation even to the city, it was deemed necessary to reconnoiter closely, when such an operation, no matter how evident the necessity, had been dispensed with from the

\* Lieutenant Ripley's Testimony before the Court of Inquiry. Executive Document, No. 65, Senate, first Session of the thirtieth Congress, p. 185.

battle of Contreras to the field of Molino del Rey. At the very time when it was perfectly easy, and when the whole system could be discerned at a glance, so far as it was necessary to discern it in order to effect an entrance, the 9th, 10th, and the morning of the 11th were consumed in observation; and the reconnaissances were not confined to the unfinished defenses of the lines of San Antonio, but it was endeavored to find a route by which they could be turned. After the American army had attacked and carried the strongest works of the enemy at Churubusco and Molino del Rey by direct assault, it was endeavored to avoid unfinished works by penetrating the lines still further to the east, between the garitas of San Antonio and La Candelaria; all of which would have been desirable if it had not been for the loss of time, but that which was consumed permitted the completion of the intrenchments, and made the eligibility of the approaches accessible to the assailants a matter of some doubt.

The time thus consumed was also made use of in establishing the depôt and general hospital at Mixcoac; a necessary proceeding, but one hardly requiring the whole three days. The order for the establishment had been issued on the 7th, and it had been intended that the work should have been completed on the 8th, which it certainly would have been had not the battle of Molino del Rey been fought on that day. It can not be doubted that, in the uncertainty which hung over the re-



sult of the negotiations for peace during the armistice, it would have been the part of good policy to have established this depôt and hospital before the recommencement of hostilities; then the delays would have been avoided, and the whole American army would have been in hand for immediate operations.

Notwithstanding the fortifications around San Antonio, on the morning of the 11th, when the determination was taken to assault Chapultepec, the southern route was to all appearance the least formidable against an assault. There the forcing of a single point carried the whole line, and the city was open. On the western route, the first point to be gained was the strongest of all on the south and west, and when that was gained, the assailants were yet at a distance of two miles from the city, with the positive certainty of running upon the citadel if the direct route were pursued, and the probability of encountering other defensive works.

The question had evidently been deeply considered by General Scott, and unless he had received some secret intimation from the enemy, it must be believed that he depended for success upon the moral effect of the loss of Chapultepec upon the Mexican government and army. Why else was it believed that a white flag would be sent from the capital so soon as it fell?

The inundations which covered the ground in the direction of San Antonio on the morning of the

11th were considered obstacles of some magnitude to the approach in that direction. Firm ground was afforded for the erection of counter batteries against Chapultepec, and it was known that the ground thence to the city was in the main easy and practicable. It was fair to suppose, as was supposed, that the fortifications on the road to San Cosme were less perfectly armed and less formidable than those upon other routes, inasmuch as that road was the most distant from the positions of the American army, and as it was perfectly evident that the great losses of artillery must have left the Mexican general without a sufficient number of guns.

But with all these anticipations of the nature of the positions beyond Chapultepec, the moral effect of its capture must have been the principal dependence for the victory; otherwise one battle at San Antonio, fortified and strengthened even as it was, had the effect of two at Chapultepec and the garrisons of the city. If dependence were placed upon the belief that Chapultepec would involve the capital in its fall, then the future operations could be left in a manner out of the question, and that which was presented was, which was the most eligible point of the two for immediate attack. One general officer, who was not to share in the assault, and one engineer officer, supported General Scott's opinion; all others inclined to the belief that San Antonio was the true point of attack.

*The diversion on San Antonio and the cannonade of Chapultepec.*

The diversion was necessary, but whether it had all the effect which has been attributed to it by some, may well be doubted. Santa Anna was in person near Chapultepec on the 12th and on the morning of the 13th, and as many Mexican troops were about the position as could well be handled. His presence would indicate that the President considered that Chapultepec would be the ultimate object of attack; nevertheless, he kept a strong force about the garita San Antonio.

The movement of Pillow's and Quitman's divisions from Piedad and its vicinity to Tacubaya after night, prevented the attention of the enemy to the batteries which were being located. Two of these were constructed during the night without interruption; and, what was of greater importance, the enemy was not aware of the movement until Pillow was in position on the fields west of Molino del Rey. Then it was too late for him to garrison it in such strength as to render it necessary for that general to fight a battle to obtain possession. It was accordingly seized, and the first important step was gained without other opposition than that from the distant fire from Chapultepec.

Of the effect of the cannonade proposed to be opened upon the castle, an exaggerated opinion had been entertained. It was believed that, after being cannonaded for one day, it would be so shattered that it would be abandoned by the enemy, or reduced to such a state that it could be readily



carried by assault.\* If this opinion were founded upon ordinary data, the distance from the points at which it was intended to erect the batteries must have been misjudged. Certainly no breaching battery, composed of guns of ordinary caliber, was ever efficient at the distance of twelve hundred yards.

As batteries for annoying the garrison, and as counter batteries, they were highly effective, and were as well located as the nature of the ground permitted. There is no doubt that the moral effect of the cannonade was great upon the evening of the 12th; but that more had been expected, is evident from the fact that the immediate preparation for the attack was not ordered until so late on the afternoon of the 12th of September that it was impossible to execute it on that day. In consequence, the night was allowed the enemy to re-enforce, recover, and repair, if he thought proper, and the play of the batteries necessarily ran into the second day.

*The storming of Chapultepec.*

The general plan of attack ordered by General Scott on the evening of the 12th contemplated a positive assault by both of two columns, without regard to the practicability of the different routes.

The force was nearly equal on each, but he had almost the whole army in the vicinity of the field, which was demanded by the vital importance of carrying the point. Indeed, every thing depended

\* Captain Hooker's and Captain Huger's Testimony. Executive Document, No. 65, Senate, first Session of the thirtieth Congress, p. 169, 131.

upon it, as the western front had been chosen, and the vigorous cannonade and assaults on the morning of the 13th were such as were called for by the crisis.

Of the particular arrangements of each assault, it may be remarked, that Quitman's had either too much or too little of a positive nature about them. He was operating against the most difficult front, and the nature of his ground afforded him but little opportunity for combination. He was to attack points from which the fire swept the whole approach, and unless he could turn them under a flank fire, and march over the wall of the inclosure, there was no chance of success in any thing but a direct assault.

The direct assault was the first which was ordered, and it was the first which was checked also. The advance upon a battery along a roadway flanked on either side by deep ditches, is no easy undertaking. Difficult as it was in this case, if it were intended to continue it before the fall of the castle, it is hard to perceive any reason why the storming parties were advanced to within two hundred yards of the batteries, and halted under a heavy fire; for nothing dampens the ardor of an assaulting force so much as a halt ordered in the midst of the advance, and before any thing is gained.

The direct advance being delayed, the attempt to turn the batteries and march over the wall toward the castle was made, but only one regiment succeeded in passing it near the east, and that one

was too late to participate in the actual assault of the castle. Two others moved so far to the left as to enter where the troops of the western column had previously passed, which showed that that force at least might have been spared the exposure of the advance on the Tacubaya road, and the flank march under fire of the batteries.

It has been claimed that the final assault on the lower batteries took place before the entrance into the castle from the west. This has been controverted by the sworn testimony of several witnesses of high character and standing. It certainly did not take place before the South Carolina regiment passed the wall of the inclosure,\* and as that regiment marched up the roadway to the summit of the rock by the flank,† the opposition must have been over at the time.

In regard to the halt of the storming parties, as the troops which inclined to the left to cross the fields were not intended to assault the batteries, under whose flank fire they passed, either in front, flank, or rear, it is difficult to see any reason for it, if they were able to continue on at the time. There certainly could have been none, if the assault were soon after to be continued against the batteries without re-enforcement, and while they were uninjured by other forces, and in full and uninterrupted play. It may be said that Smith's bri-

\* General Quitman's Official Report. Executive Document, No. 1, Senate, first Session of the thirtieth Congress, p. 413.

† Lieutenant-colonel Gladden's Testimony. Executive Document, No. 65, Senate, first Session of the thirtieth Congress, p. 137.



gade was not immediately in supporting position. If support were needed, three regiments of volunteers were close behind the storming parties, and diverged from the very point at which the latter were halted.

Pillow's attack from the west was, from the nature of the ground, the first to be successful, and that general spared no precaution to insure that it should be. Indeed, the immense importance of the point required no less, and all which skillful disposition and determined assault could do was in readiness to be executed in any emergency. It can hardly be doubted that his assault would have been successful even against greater resistance than was encountered.

The precautions taken to insure the first important step, the entrance into the grove, by the advance of Johnstone's party on the redan outside of the wall, under cover of the fire of Magruder's guns, at the same time that the first battalion of voltigeurs pushed at the front line of the intrenchments, which had before been shaken by the fire of the mountain howitzers, gave every chance of the success which was so speedily and happily obtained. Thence, the success of the assault depended greatly upon its celerity; and the speedy advance of the ninth and fifteenth regiments in support, as well as the personal exertions of the general in the front of the attacking column, were in keeping with the necessity. The immediate assault, after arriving at the foot of the hill, and before the storming par-

ty came up, was also necessary. In consequence, the vigor of the assault was kept up, and lodgments were effected, which insured the fall of the place so soon as the ladders should be brought forward; and what was of the most vital importance to the success of the assault, both in a moral and physical point of view, the enemy was prevented from firing his mines.

The moral effect of the explosion of mines is well known; and if, as would have been the case at Chapultepec, had they been ignited, the whole side of a rocky hill thrown upon the head of the attacking column had added to it the physical effect of its destruction, the success of the assault might have been doubtful. Certainly it would have been delayed, and would have been attended with a much greater sacrifice of life.

The storming party was out of position when the voltigeurs arrived at the foot of the hill, but, with this exception and its consequences, every corps which had originally been put in motion for the assault came in at the designated time and place. Captain M'Kenzie had reasons for delaying his advance, which made this exception one of unavoidable occurrence rather than the fault of any one. He had taken off his percussion caps and thrown out priming. Intending to depend upon the bayonet alone in the assault, and to push directly up the hill, it was of importance for him to keep his command compact and as much uninjured as possible until the crisis. By attending, per-

haps, too much to these, he was behind his time at the foot of the hill. The speedy assault of the other troops on the redan made up for the delay, and the castle was taken with less loss, though not quite so speedily as it would have been had the stormers been immediately in position ; for had they rushed up the hill and entered at once, while the Mexican artillerymen were serving their pieces, the troops would have encountered the fire in full force. As it was, by the fire of the troops around the crest of the hill the parapet was cleared of the enemy's infantry, his gunners were driven away or shot down, and when the stormers came up and the assault took place, it was made under the enemy's fire from the azoteas and windows alone.

The request which was sent by General Pillow to General Worth, that he should advance one brigade through Molino del Rey to be within easy supporting distance, was a measure of prudence. Made as it was by the former general when he was leading his troops in rapid advance, it showed that, in the excitement of the moment and of first success, nothing was lost sight of which might eventually be necessary for the conquest of the main point. As it proved, the presence of the brigade was not of necessity to insure the fall of the castle, but it might have been, and it did no injury and delayed no operation.

It has been intimated that it might well have been dispensed with, and that Worth could then have moved his force around the northern base of



Chapultepec, in order to fall upon the rear of the forces engaging Quitman,\* and to distract the attention of the enemy in general. General Scott mentions having sent an order to such an effect to Worth. But Pillow knew only that Worth was ordered to support him, if necessary; and had he known of the order, it would have made slight difference. Under all circumstances, the movement was perfectly useless, and if Worth ever received the order, he made no effort to put it into execution. General Scott knew that there were armed barricades on the road by which the movement must have been made, and that those must fall when Chapultepec was carried. He must also have seen that the fall of the castle would have insured that of the batteries which checked Quitman's advance. Moreover, Pillow's advance had been uninterrupted at the moment when the order was issued, and he was in a fair way for success. Why, then, was it ordered that Worth's troops, which had been placed in position to support him, to guard against a contingency which, if it had happened, would have rendered their presence of most vital importance, should engage in an undertaking which would have been accomplished in case Pillow was successful, and was perfectly useless in case of his defeat, and that, too, at the very moment of the crisis?

In consequence of Pillow's arrangement of his

\* General Scott's Official Report. Executive Document, No. 1, Senate, first Session of the thirtieth Congress, p. 380.

own troops, and his request for the advance of Clarke's brigade, six battalions and the storming party were present on the west front of the castle when the entrance was effected. The force was still further increased by the arrival of the New York and Pennsylvania regiments. By this combination of arrangement and fortune, the greatest mass of the American troops was present, ready for action upon the decisive point. Although the whole number was not immediately used, and not absolutely necessary, as it proved, yet such a disposition is required by the general rules of military art; and where the troops are of the proper kind, it never fails of success, and it did not fail here. The rapid advance through the fields and grove, and the continued ascent of the hill, opened the way for the capture of Chapultepec. The castle was, in effect, taken, and the collection of a force about the western front provided against all chance of defeat, and insured its fall. At the same time, a force was brought forward, which, from its commanding position, would be sufficient to bring down all exterior works both on the Tacubaya road and on the north.

An attack commenced, led, and supported as this was, could hardly have failed under almost any opposition. As it proved, the success was as brilliant as the object was important. Of that importance it is hardly necessary to speak. But when it was obtained, the batteries which had before held the assailants of Quitman's and Trousedale's commands

in check, fell at once, and were occupied by the American troops. The advance by both the roads of Belen and San Cosme was open to the American army. The Mexican troops, beaten and broken, were in rapid retreat; and the moral effect of the fall of the strongest point on the west of Mexico could not but have been of the greatest importance, since the western front had been chosen for attack. It is true that no white flag was sent from the city to welcome the conquerors, and that much opposition remained to be encountered before the triumphant entrance into the Mexican capital; but the road was opened, and by one route it was comparatively easy under skillful guidance. The first great point in the final struggle had been gained, and the success of that struggle was insured.

All the moral force of the American army was restored at the moment when Pillow's victorious troops crossed the parapet of Chapultepec, and in the pride and exultation of the moment none doubted that the great victory of the war had been accomplished, and that the final object of the campaign was within reach. The various jealousies which had place in the American army at a later date had no place then; and the congratulations of friends, the acclaiming shouts of the soldiery, as the commander of the western attack was borne wounded into the Castle of Chapultepec, which had been the end of his dispositions and his efforts, and the commendations of the general-in-chief soon



afterward, told at that time of the importance of the capture, and to whom its glory belonged.

*The attacks on the garitas of Belen and San Cosme.*

The subsequent movements both on the Belen and San Cosme roads had the great element of success, celerity. It would probably have been better had Quitman's movements been of a less positive character, and if they had stopped short of the garita; for he ran upon the citadel, and the fire from that work inflicted the greatest loss which the American army suffered on the afternoon of that day. The immediate and vigorous assault must have had a very beneficial moral effect, besides that of keeping a large force in men and artillery employed in that direction. Worth's movements were thereby favored. But direct advance into the city by the Belen route was impracticable without storming the citadel. That was no easy undertaking; for the work was bastioned, mounted fifteen guns, and was surrounded by deep wet ditches. No further advance was attempted, and Quitman's command, including Smith's brigade, was stationary at the garita of Belen, and under a heavy fire from two o'clock until nightfall. The gallant bravery of the attack, and the stern determination to hold the point at all hazards, can not be too much admired in the general or his troops; but whether the object was worth the loss, when the San Cosme route was the most practicable, and when General Scott was sending there

a force which would insure the entrance, may well be doubted.

Worth's movements were such as might have been expected of him in the pursuit of the victory. They were characterized by celerity until celerity became incompatible with prudence, and meanwhile by a careful observation of the points of the whole field of operations. He was therefore enabled to assist Quitman's advance against the first intrenchments on the Belen road.

The necessary delay at the angle of the aqueduct in reorganizing, caused the necessity of retaking the barricade intermediate between his position and the garita of San Cosme, which had previously been occupied by the advanced parties; but when the movement was finally undertaken, it was steady, and such as could not fail of success. It might have been easy to have carried both barricade and garita at an earlier period of the day, by advancing, as Quitman advanced, along the aqueduct, gaining temporary shelter in the arches; but the advance through the houses was quite as certain of ultimate success, and was attended with a less loss of life than such a one would have been. Time was not immediately pressing; and, indeed, so that the last defense was carried on that afternoon, and the enemy thereby prevented from strengthening his positions, it was better that the night should put a stop to the operations while the troops were in hand, than if, without a full knowledge of localities, they should have been spread

over the city. The latter would probably have been the case had the entrance been effected earlier. It would hardly have been possible to have prevented the escape of the Mexican army with such train as was actually carried with it. Unless it were an object to do so, the military operations of the American army were successfully finished with the capture of the garita of San Cosme. As it was, all of any importance were ended with it, for the occupation of the palace was unopposed, and the street fighting of the liberated convicts and leperos, although annoying and vexatious, was without any positive effect upon the great question of hostilities.

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The campaign which had been commenced by the advance from Puebla, was brought to a close by the capture and occupation of the city of Mexico. The little army of 10,500 men, which had taken the field on the 7th of August, after having been diminished by sickness and the casualties of battle more than one third of its effective numbers, on the 14th of September was within the enemy's capital, triumphant. It had marched from Puebla to Mexico, had turned the capital and presented itself in the rear, and had won the city in the battles of Contreras and Churubusco. Every military advantage which it had acquired was surrendered by the convention of Tacubaya to a doubtful prospect of negotiation. If its situation had been danger-



ous in its first attack, it was still more so, by many fold, when the second was about to be entered upon. Yet, in spite of all obstacles, it had triumphed repeatedly, both in regaining the advantages which had been sacrificed and in pursuing those regained, whenever it had been allowed the opportunity. It had fought through a bloody field in search of an uncertain object, but it had not failed to triumph even there, against every disadvantage. Opportunity had been lost, time thrown away, and, finally, it had attacked the strongest point, had carried it, and, over such obstacles as are seldom encountered by an invading force, had borne the banner of its country to the palace of the supreme powers of Mexico.

In all these military operations, the unsurpassed valor of the soldiery and the skill of the officers had borne the burden which had been imposed, increased as it was by the sacrifices of all advantages, and by the effect of the mistaken confidence in the faith of a man noted for his perfidy, but in none more eminent and in none more successful than in that by which he practiced upon the American general and the commissioner.

The army that had broken the Mexican strength on so many fields had burst through every barrier, and before its repeated assaults the fortifications of Mexico, their powerful armament, her 35,000 defenders, had all given way, beaten and dispersed, and the occupation of the capital, long anticipated, was accomplished.

In the face of so many obstacles, that it was ever gained is cause of wonder; and even now, when every event of the strife is fresh in memory, the mind can hardly realize that it has not been a dream. It has passed, and, in the ever-changing excitement of the public, that which so lately was the all-absorbing subject of interest upon the western continent has been in a measure forgotten. But the effects of the deeds of arms will not soon pass away. They are not developed for good or for evil. The great consequences which, in the wisdom of God's infinite power, must flow from the war in Mexico, in great measure lie hid in the future, and years on years must be required for their demonstration.

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## CHAPTER XV.

Situation of General Santa Anna—His Action—Blockade of Garrison of Puebla—Movement of Troops from the Northern to the Southern Line of Operations—March of Re-enforcements from Vera Cruz—Affairs at Paso de Ovejas, Puente Nacional, and Cerro Gordo—Advance of General Lane's Command—Affair at Huamantla—Affair at Atlixco—Observations and Reflections.

FOR some days after his evacuation of the capital, General Santa Anna kept his head-quarters at the city of Guadalupe Hidalgo. From that place he sent parties to assist in the straggling warfare which had been undertaken by the leperos and liberated convicts. They were, however, too small

to be efficient, and, being composed of the troops of Alvarez's command, they plundered their own countrymen in the capital instead of making war upon the Americans.

The predicament of the President of Mexico was indeed a sad one. His great preparations of military strength and his skillful diplomacy had proved unavailing for the purposes of successful resistance. With the remnant of his numerous army, he found himself outside of the capital of his country, without subsistence and without money, and without the means of obtaining either. Public and private resources were alike exhausted. For the period during which hostilities had continued after the armistice, and, indeed, for the greater portion of its continuance, he had supported the army by a loan effected on public and private securities through Mr. M'Intosh, the British consul, who was so conspicuous in the negotiations with General Scott. That last method of raising funds was lost by the fall of the capital, and the necessity was forced upon Santa Anna of breaking up the remaining corps which were under his command. His policy for future operations was to attack the communication of the American army. Had the country along the route been exceeding rich, he doubtless would have kept the whole force together. As it was not, he took the course of ordering a column of troops, numbering about 3000, under General Herrera, to march on the northern road to Queretaro, the place fixed upon as the temporary seat of



government. A portion of the force was disbanded, and with the remainder, principally of cavalry, Santa Anna marched upon Puebla. The amount of the remainder has been variously stated at from 2500, of all arms, to 8000. The actual number was doubtless between the two, and varied on each succeeding day, according to the number of desertions, or the accession of guerilla and robber bands.

Before the movement was commenced, Santa Anna gave his attention to politics, and for the first step he resigned the presidency, and, by a decree, devolved the power upon the judges of the supreme court of justice. The announced motive for resigning was the earnest desire which he had for serving his country in the field, and the distance of the proposed theater of operations from the center of population and resources. In a circular, which bore date on the 16th of September, these motives and reasons were more fully set forth, accompanied by many protestations of devoted patriotism, and many vaunts of the exertions which he had made for the defense of the capital. Although the last were highly colored in the exuberance of Mexican style, yet they were for the greater part based upon facts. It is true, nothing was said about the negotiations with General Scott, by which he had endeavored to secure advantage to himself in the event of either alternative of victory or defeat; nor was it said that, being without the means of sustaining a large force in the field or of attaching it to his cause, he was unwilling to encounter the

hazard of remaining in the chief magistracy during the first indignation consequent upon the loss of the capital. Under the circumstances, it was almost impossible for him to continue in power for any length of time; and, notwithstanding all his exertions both for himself and his country, he might in reason have expected to be put to death by the first mob of leperos which would collect in any city which he might enter. His resignation was therefore, like most of his acts, one of policy; and while he and his friends spared no representation which the facts would allow to sustain his reputation, he proceeded to demonstrate his devotion by such military operations as the nature of circumstances permitted.

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The American garrison of Puebla, consisting of about 500 effectives and 1800 invalids, under command of Colonel Childs, occupied the positions which have been mentioned in a former chapter. The greater body of the force had remained within the immediate vicinity of them after the main army had marched upon the capital. For some weeks subsequent to that event, no decided demonstration of hostility had been attempted against the garrison, though cabals and conspiracies were rife among the populace, and no opportunity was lost of assassinating any straggling soldier who ventured alone beyond the protection of his comrades.

The first news received by the Poblanos of the

operations about the city of Mexico was favorable to the Mexican cause, and they demonstrated their joy by a ringing of bells, and collecting in a mob in the Plaza of the city. A few shot and shell sent from Fort Loretto, and the advance of a few companies of infantry into the Plaza, put a stop to the bell ringing, and dispersed the crowd. As the subsequent accounts did not verify the first rumors, nothing further in the way of Mexican rejoicing was manifested for several succeeding days.

During this time, however, the guerillas of the neighborhood were organizing under General Rea, and the populace being fairly aroused, with that re-enforcement, on the night of the 13th of September, the open demonstration of insurrection was commenced. On that night a fire was opened from several streets of the city, in the direction of the cuartel San José, the depôt in the town. It ceased during the day on the 14th, but on that night it recommenced from every point whence a fire could be directed, and continued, after the manner of Mexican revolutions, for twenty-eight days and nights.

The enemy had complete possession of all parts of the town, except the quarter in the vicinity of San José, and immediately under the guns of Guadalupe and Loretto. His principal energy was displayed in robbing the stores and houses of the better classes of the inhabitants in every portion of the city occupied by the guerilleros. The operations against the garrison were confined to the incessant though distant fire from azoteas and windows upon



any Americans who showed themselves. The garrison replied to the fire with artillery and musketry whenever an opportunity was presented, but in the main the defense consisted only in the exercise of vigilance.

After some days of annoyance, the Mexicans attempted to turn a small stream of water which supplied the garrison, but were unsuccessful. Failing in this, the guerilleros occupied houses which commanded the course of the stream through the American quarter, and annoyed those who were obtaining water with a distant fire.

The great proportion of Mexican cavalry enabled the enemy to drive off most of the live stock in the vicinity; but it was not attempted until two well-directed parties of the garrison had succeeded in securing fifty head of cattle and four hundred sheep.

General Santa Anna arrived at Puebla from Guadalupe Hidalgo on the 22d, with a heavy reinforcement for the besiegers. He had employed the interval in attempting to obstruct the road between Mexico and Puebla, to oppose the march of any relieving force from the main American army. Several miles east of Rio Frio had been broken up and rendered difficult by felling large trees across it, and several bridges had been destroyed, but further than these nothing was executed in that way.

The presence of the late president was the occasion of loud manifestations of joy on the part of the besiegers, and a general ringing of bells announced

it to the garrison. A few shot and shell sent from Fort Loretto put a stop to the rejoicing, as they had done on a previous occasion. From that day until the 25th the attack was but partially kept up.

On the 25th Santa Anna summoned Colonel Childs to surrender, offering him free passage with the troops of his garrison either to the main American army or to the Castle of Perote. He stated that the Mexican force in and about the city of Puebla numbered 8000, and that he should proceed to an immediate and vigorous assault unless his terms were accepted. Childs of course refused the offer.\* Contrary to his expressed determination, Santa Anna made no demonstration of attack on the 25th or 26th. On the 27th, however, it was resumed, and the Mexican troops made more positive demonstrations of vigorous assault, but in every instance their attacking parties were driven back with loss.

Until the 30th of September the besiegers used no artillery, but on the night of the 29th, two six pounders were placed in position to bear upon San José from the south. On the following morning they opened a fire somewhat noisily, which was kept up throughout the day. It was replied to by a twelve pounder, located at a traverse on the Plaza, near the cuartel. But the artillery fire was ineffectual on both sides, and the parties kept their positions.

\* Correspondence. Executive Document, No. 60, House of Representatives, first Session of the thirtieth Congress, p. 1029.

It being known that an American column was on its march from Vera Cruz, and expected soon to arrive, on the 1st of October General Santa Anna marched from Puebla with 4000 men. His avowed purpose was that of disputing the pass of El Piñal. He took with him the artillery which had opened against the Americans on the previous day, and that kind of fire ceased from the time. The annoyance of musketry from the streets and houses was, however, persisted in.

On the 2d, a party of 50 men was advanced from San José, and penetrated through and over the walls of houses to a point opposite to a barricade thrown across the street leading to the west. After a short struggle, the Mexicans were driven from it with a loss of 17 killed, and the barricade, which was of cotton bales, was fired and consumed. A prominent house in the vicinity, whence the enemy had directed a vexatious fire, was blown up, and the party retired, having, after a severe labor of twenty-four hours in cutting its way through the walls, accomplished its object, and relieved the garrison from the greatest annoyance from the west. Another sortie ordered on the same day was not so successful. The designated building was entered, but the Mexicans were in great strength, and the party was ordered to fall back.

On the 6th and 8th two sorties were made from the hill of Guadalupe, both of which succeeded in driving back parties of the enemy which occupied buildings near the Tivoli gardens, south of San



José. On the 8th, the enemy received a considerable re-enforcement. A close demonstration was attempted on his part, but it resulted in nothing except loss to those who made the attempt.

On the 10th, the firing which had been kept up on the American positions slackened, and on the night of the 11th it ceased altogether. On the morning of the 12th the enemy began to retire from his positions, and two companies were advanced toward the heart of the city from San José. In the endeavor to cut off the retreat of a party of Mexicans, one of these companies became engaged with a body of near 500 lancers. It was charged upon from different directions; 13 of its number were killed, and four wounded. The other company came up in time to take part in the affair, and the lancers were dispersed with loss. Soon after, the column of American troops which had been expected arrived, and the blockade and annoyance of the garrison of Puebla ceased.

During the continuance of the affair, from the 13th of September to the 12th of October, a constant vigilance under the harassing fire had been exercised, and men and officers of the garrison had kept steadily to their stations. Seventy-two had fallen, of whom nineteen were killed. The loss of the Mexicans is unknown to Americans, and probably to their own authorities.

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No official dispatches from the army under General Scott were received at Washington of a later date than that of June the 4th,\* in which the general had made known the extent of his supposed grievances, and announced his intention of making his army a self-sustaining machine, by abandoning his communications and withdrawing the garrison from Jalapa, until as late as November following, when the official reports of the operations of the valley came to hand. As no definite plan of the extended operations of the war had been treated of in the letters of General Scott, filled as they were with complaints, the War Department was in the same situation which it had occupied at an earlier period with reference to General Taylor. It was under the necessity of supporting operations, of the extent and object of which it was in a measure ignorant. The recruits and re-enforcements which it had earliest put en route for Vera Cruz, it has been seen, were for the most part brought up by M'Intosh, Cadwalader, Pillow, and Pierce, and arrived at Puebla in time to march thence to Mexico.

On the 30th of April Mr. Marcy had addressed a letter to General Scott, requesting his views with reference to the operations on the northern line.† The dispatch had been intercepted, and, in the absence of interrogatories, General Scott made no

\* Mr. Marcy to General Scott, October 22d, 1847. Executive Document, No. 60, House of Representatives, first Session of the thirtieth Congress, p. 1009.

† Mr. Marcy to General Scott, April 30th, 1847. Idem, p. 922.

suggestions and offered no advice upon the subject.

General Taylor treated of the matter in two letters. Inasmuch as he did not deem the force which would be at his disposal, after having garrisoned Saltillo, Monterey, Camargo, and Matamoras, sufficient to enable him to maneuver confidently in the direction of San Luis, he was in favor of holding a defensive line, and of sending all the surplus troops to the support of General Scott's column.\* Accordingly, on the 15th of July, instructions were sent from Washington for the suggestion to be carried out. Having received them, General Taylor issued his orders on the 16th of August for the commands of Generals Lane and Cushing, and a regiment of Texan horse, to embark at Brazos San Jago for Vera Cruz. With these movements of troops, the inactivity which had existed in the north of Mexico since the battle of Buena Vista was officially recognized, and even the idea of advancing upon San Luis was abandoned, as it might well have been at an earlier period.

The operations in that section of country had for a long time been confined to the convoy of trains and the changes of position, rendered necessary by the discharge of one set of troops and the arrival of another. The surplus force had for some months been distributed in temporary camps of instruction

\* General Taylor to the Adjutant General, May 28th and June 16th, 1847. Executive Document, No. 60, House of Representatives, first Session of the thirtieth Congress, p. 1147 and 1177.



along the Rio Grande, and, with the scarcity of numbers, as well as the evident impossibility of effecting any diversion in favor of the main advance on the capital by the long and tedious march upon so unimportant a point as San Luis, the proper disposition of the force which was disposable was at last made.

Before the arrival of any portion of it at Vera Cruz, a column had marched from that point to the interior, consisting of eleven companies of recruits for the different regiments of the regular army, two companies and a platoon of volunteer cavalry, and with two six pounders—in all, the column numbered near 1000 men, and was under the command of Major Lally, of the ninth infantry.

The march was commenced on the 6th of August, and was uninterrupted as far as Paso de Ovejas; but as the points on the road had been entirely abandoned, the guerilleros had enjoyed full opportunity for organization, and by that time were in far greater force than three weeks previously, when Pierce's column had passed up. Under General Juan Soto, the governor of the State of Vera Cruz, who had figured in the defense of Alvarado, some 2000 or more men were in the field, ready for annoying the march of any convoy. On the 10th they commenced operations against Lally's column by firing upon it as it approached Paso de Ovejas. As the fire, delivered at long range, failed to distract the American troops, a more positive operation was attempted.

Occupying the ruins of a stone house upon Lally's right and front, the guerilleros opened thence a heavy fire, and, at nearly the same time, strong parties attacked the rear guard and the center of the train. As this was composed of sixty-four wagons, the American order of march had been in two wings, one in front and one in rear, while the center of the train was protected by a guard.

When the fire was received in front, the six pounders were advanced, and opened upon the Mexican position. The whole of the advanced wing, with the exception of two companies left to protect the head of the train, was soon after ordered forward. A charge was directed, and was successfully, though most confusedly executed. The troops were all recruits, and although they followed their officers with alacrity, they could hardly be made to understand the purport of their orders.

The point in front being carried, the march was continued, for the attacks on the front and rear had been repulsed, as well as a movement on the head of the train, which had been attempted while the greater portion of the advanced wing was engaged in attacking the ruins.

In the course of the skirmish, two American officers and nine men had been wounded. The Mexican loss was trifling.

The column remained at Paso de Ovejas on the 11th, and on the 12th continued the march to Puente Nacional. There the guerillas were posted in force, occupying the fort on the height south

of the road, the hills beyond the bridge on the north, and the houses on the west bank of the river. They made no show at first, either in the old fort or in the houses. The bridge was barricaded, but unoccupied. Under the belief that the whole resistance which would be encountered would proceed from the heights on the north of the road, the six pounders were advanced toward the hacienda, with two companies of infantry in support. Before the point was reached, the enemy showed himself in the old fort and in the houses, besides forming in greater strength on the northern heights. He at once opened a fire which drove the American infantry to cover under the parapet of the bridge, and forced the artillery to retire after a few rounds of canister had been discharged at the enemy immediately in front. So soon as the guns were out of musket range, one was opened upon the old fort from the road. Under cover of its fire, a party advanced to attack it. The other gun was hauled up a hill upon the right, whence it was directed, over the heads of the troops still occupying the bridge under the parapet, against the guerilleros on the heights beyond. The enemy soon abandoned the old fort and the houses, and his fire from the heights was sensibly diminished. A small party of infantry advanced over the barricade to the houses, and as other troops came up it was cleared away, the train brought forward, and the enemy retired.

One officer and ten soldiers killed and mortally



wounded, and four officers and thirty-six soldiers wounded, were the losses experienced by the Americans in the affair. The Mexicans suffered from the fire of the artillery, but their speedy retreat prevented a severe loss.

During the 13th, the column was detained at Puente Nacional, awaiting the arrival of re-enforcements, which had been requested from the governor of Vera Cruz after the occurrence of the affair at Paso de Ovejas. On the 14th it marched to Plan del Rio. The train and hospital were left at that place, under a guard of one company and of the broken-down men of the column.

On the morning of the 15th, the remaining forces were advanced to secure possession of the pass of Cerro Gordo, which it was anticipated would be found occupied by the enemy. On arriving at the mouth of the pass, a musketry fire was received from the hill sides, and the enemy was found in occupation of Santa Anna's old lines of the 18th of April.

The American six pounders were opened and played while the infantry was forming for the attack. Three companies were soon sent in the chaparral on the right of the road, and, after some sharp firing, the enemy fled from the hill sides in that direction. Three other companies were sent at nearly the same time to carry the lines south of the road. Lieutenant Ridgely, of the fourth infantry, who commanded, led his party by the route pursued by General Pillow on the 18th of April,

and made his dispositions for attacking battery No. 2. The men were undiscovered until within a few yards of the enemy, and then, running quickly forward, they carried the position in spite of the noisy fire of muskets, escopetas, and a dismounted nine pounder, with which they were received. No. 2 being carried, the enemy fled from Nos. 1 and 3. During the night of the 15th a party was sent up the pass, which removed a barricade constructed across the road near the base of Cerro Gordo. On the following morning the main hill was occupied.

In this affair of Cerro Gordo, the American loss was three soldiers killed and ten wounded.

As it had been learned that re-enforcements were on their way, on the 16th a party of dragoons was sent to the rear to meet them. But the Puente Nacional was found to be occupied by the enemy, and on the 17th the dragoons returned. Then Lally moved on in the direction of Jalapa.

On the 19th, when within one mile and a half of the city, the command was fired upon by a guerrilla posted under cover of a stone wall on the hill side near the road. Two soldiers were killed, and the commanding officer and six soldiers were wounded. A few discharges of artillery drove the enemy away with loss, but the advance was delayed until near nightfall. The city was not reached until after dark, and, as an officer sent with a message to the alcalde was fired upon in the streets, no attempt was made to enter until the fol-

lowing morning. Then, the friendly disposition of the inhabitants being avowed, the town was quietly occupied.

By this time the list of wounded and sick had increased to more than two hundred. The animals of the train were completely broken down. A long halt was necessary for the purpose of reuniting and refitting the command, and for some days no further attempt was made to advance.

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By the 20th of September a considerable number of troops had arrived at Vera Cruz from the northern line of operations. At that time General Lane marched thence with one regiment of Indiana volunteers, one of Ohio, two battalions of recruits, five small companies of volunteer horse, and two pieces of artillery. The whole force numbered about 2500 of the different arms.

On the second days' march, when near the hacienda of Mango del Clavo, a party of guerillas was observed. A company of Louisiana horse was detached in pursuit, and after a smart skirmish the guerilla was dispersed.

Two days subsequently, as the command was leaving Paso de Ovejas, the rear guard was fired upon and an officer was killed. No other serious interruption took place to the march to Jalapa, where a junction was effected with Lally's column.

In the mean time, information of Childs's situation at Puebla was received, and although the commands were much in need of rest, and the train of



repair, the whole force soon after marched forward, leaving Jalapa again ungarrisoned.

Rumors of the concentration of a Mexican force on the road between Perote and Puebla were received on the march, and they were confirmed to a great extent upon arriving at the castle. It was believed that the opposition was to be encountered at the pass of El Piñal, and the strength of the column was increased by a company of mounted rifles and four of volunteer infantry, besides three field guns from the Castle of Perote. The advance was continued.

General Santa Anna had not occupied the pass of El Piñal, but, with his force of 4000 men of different arms, and six pieces of artillery, had taken post at Huamantla, a town some miles north of the main road and east of the pass. His object must have been to allow the train of the American column to become entangled in the defile, and to fall on the rear guard with his whole force; but if he supposed that he would be neglected, he must have counted upon the character of the American troops, which were nearly all raw.

Lane, however, received information of his position on the 8th of October. He parked his train at the hacienda of San Antonio Tamaris, which was garrisoned by the regiment of Ohio volunteers and a battalion of three companies of recruits, with two field guns. On the morning of the 9th the remaining forces marched by a route diverging from the main road toward Huamantla.

Santa Anna was not prepared for this approach, nor did the Mexican pickets discover it until the advanced guard of the American column was within three miles of the town. Several parties of horsemen were then discovered by the Americans making their way in retreat through the intervening fields. Captain Walker, whose company of mounted rifles and the volunteer cavalry constituted the advance, ordered a gallop in pursuit. The infantry and artillery under Lane's immediate command continued the march. The thick hedges of maguey on either side of the road soon concealed Walker's movements from the column in rear, but a heavy fire from the town announced the commencement of the engagement. The movements were therefore hastened to support it.

Walker had dashed rapidly into the town, and attacked a body of about five hundred lancers, stationed, with two pieces of artillery, in the Plaza. They were soon driven from the guns, and the greater number were dispersed; but, heavy reinforcements coming up to their support, the disorderly pursuit of the Americans was checked. They were severely cut up, especially the company of mounted rifles. Walker was killed, and the greater portion of the whole loss sustained by the American troops in the affair (thirteen killed and eleven wounded) fell upon his command.

Upon the arrival of the infantry, Lane ordered Colonel Gorman to enter the town with his Indiana regiment on the west, Colonel Wynkoop to ad-

vance on the east with his battalion and the artillery, and Captain Heintzelman, with six companies of recruits, to penetrate at a point on the right of Wynkoop. Lally's command was held in reserve.

Gorman's regiment arrived first and opened fire upon the enemy. Seeing the arrival of a large infantry force, the Mexicans gave up the contest and fled, leaving the two guns, from which Walker had driven them, and a considerable store of ammunition, in the hands of the Americans. The troops of the column entered the town, which they held throughout the night.

The train was brought up on the following day, and the march to Puebla was continued. That city was entered on the 12th, while the guerillas, which had been annoying Childs for some thirty previous days, were in the act of abandoning it. Lane's advanced troops were in time to deliver a few shots at the retreating enemy as he hurried away; but resistance was over, the occupation was quietly effected, the garrison was relieved, and order to a certain extent was restored in Puebla.

The retiring Mexican forces fell back upon Atlixco, the temporary seat of the state government. By the 18th of October a considerable number had been collected and was in position with two pieces of artillery. General Rea commanded them. Lane, hearing of the state of things, ordered a movement upon the point of the force which had arrived with him at Puebla.



The column marched at eleven o'clock on the 19th, and, having made seven Spanish leagues by four o'clock in the afternoon, fell in with the advanced pickets of the enemy. The cavalry, having been detached to examine a hacienda on the route, was not immediately at hand, and the column was halted. The enemy advanced a few parties, which opened a fire of escopetas, and made other demonstrations of fighting; but when the cavalry came up and the column advanced, they became confused. Lane sent a squadron of horse against them, and they fled. The cavalry pursued for a mile and a half, when the guerilleros made a stand and opened a noisy fire. Upon the appearance of the artillery and infantry, however, they again took to flight, having received a few shots. The dragoons followed, and, within a mile and a half of Atlixco, came upon the main body, posted on a hill side, in a dense growth of chaparral. The horsemen immediately dashed into it, but the enemy made little resistance. His men were cut down in great numbers, and, on the reappearance of the infantry, the whole guerilla force fled in utter confusion, pursued as far as practicable by the American cavalry.

The length of the march, the heat of the day, and the fatigue of the skirmishes, had broken down the horses of the cavalry so much that the continued speedy pursuit was impracticable. It was not until after nightfall that the whole command reached Atlixco, having marched ten Spanish leagues since eleven o'clock of the morning. General Lane

deemed it unsafe to enter at night and incur the risk of a street fight. He posted his artillery on a height which commanded the town, and opened fire. It was continued for three quarters of an hour, when Colonel Brough's and Major Lally's commands were directed to enter cautiously. The danger of resistance, however, had passed, the guerrilleros had fled, and the Ayuntamiento waited upon Lane to beg that the town might be spared.

On the following morning the town was searched for arms and ammunition. General Rea had succeeded in carrying off two pieces of artillery and their equipment to Matamoras, a small village eleven leagues beyond Atlixco. Such arms as were found were destroyed, and Lane returned to Puebla, having lost but one man killed and one wounded in the whole affair, although he had inflicted a severe chastisement upon the enemy.

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In these isolated minor operations on the American line of communications, whatever of strength remained to the beaten army of Mexico was broken and dissipated. Thenceforward no force of any great number of troops, under any regular commander, appeared in the field against the invaders.

General Santa Anna's operations were such as were left to him, and those alone, which, if successful, would have had a beneficial effect upon the cause of his country or his own interest; but the conduct of his troops in the various affairs in which

they were engaged, proved fully that the work of demoralization was complete. Although the fall of the Mexican capital did not put a stop to the operations of guerillas and robbers, yet it broke the center of all resources. A vigilant military police was all which was necessary to complete the conquest of Mexico. Mexicans knew that such was the case, and as well as any, Santa Anna believed it. In one of his proclamations, issued previously to the advance of the American army from Puebla, exhorting his fellow-countrymen to defend their capital, he made use of the strongest arguments to impress upon them the vital importance of its possession at any cost. The whole history of Mexico, from the time of Cortez to the date on which he wrote, was appealed to in support of the position which he assumed. Now that the American army held the capital, the truth was presented in fearful force, and the evidence of it could not fail to paralyze the efforts of the general and troops. In this state of feeling, the vigor which was necessary for success in any undertaking, and especially when it was known that re-enforcements were on the march from Vera Cruz, was nowhere put forth, and it is doubtful whether it could have been.

The blockade and annoyance of the garrison of Puebla was but the mockery of a military operation for any positive end. If it were intended to starve out the garrison, a larger force was requisite than any at Santa Anna's disposal, to keep up the blockade and to beat the re-enforcements, which



must have been his plan of operations. The result of the affair at Huamantla soon proved it, and the final effort of the Mexican general resulted in a disgraceful failure.

Of all the many vicissitudes of Santa Anna's eventful life, none could have been more full of remarkable incidents, and in none did he display his energy and talent for preparation more than in the occurrences of the Mexican war. He had come to his country from exile, was hailed as her defender, had raised a large army, had lost it at Angostura, had quelled a revolution in the capital, and had raised another army, which had been dissipated before the assault of the invaders on the lines of Cerro Gordo. Denounced and proscribed, he had, nevertheless, held power, partially recovered his popularity, and raised again another army, the largest ever in the field on Mexican soil since the Spanish conquest, had fortified the capital, and defended it by intrigue and arms until defense was impossible. He still kept the field in such manner as he was able, and finally ended his operations at Huamantla.

Such continued ill fortune has rarely attended the efforts of so able a man as Santa Anna. Had a leader of a so extended genius, with his perfect knowledge of the resources of Mexico, been at the head of brave troops, there can be no doubt what the result of his operations would have been. But the spirit of the troops was not in keeping with the talent of the commander. The moral force was

wanting. Frittered away as it had been in the countless revolutions of Mexico, shaken as had been the remainder at the battles of Palo Alto, Resaca, and Monterey, before he commenced operations, his efforts on the field could not compare with those in the cabinet. And it can not, in truth, be denied by any friend of Santa Anna, that with all his ability, there is to be seen in all of his positive military operations an instability of purpose in the very crisis of battle, which will never fail to ruin any general, however great his talent, who does not command troops already of good and brave character. A general who acts in such a manner never inspired a courageous sentiment, none such ever induced brave conduct. But the magnitude of Santa Anna's plans, the celerity of his marches, and the skill of his intriguing diplomacy, justly entitle him to fame, despite his faults and his vicious moral character.

The movements of the American troops in these last operations were almost entirely accidental, and were guided by no object except that of endeavoring to penetrate Mexico to the theater of Scott's operations. Such directions were all which could be given from Washington, and such was the purpose which was naturally presented to the commanders upon starting from Vera Cruz. By the abandonment of his line of communications with Vera Cruz, General Scott had precluded himself from receiving any information of the state of affairs in his rear, and of directing the movements

of re-enforcements. Indeed, he was without authentic information of the march of any from the base until after the completion of the operations in which they took part, although rumors of the position of Lally's command at Jalapa reached him during the armistice. But he gave no immediate orders, nor could he give any. The chiefs of the different columns were left to themselves, and with such mixed troops as they commanded, and inexperienced as they were, their operations were eminently irregular and uncertain, although successful.

The ultimate cause of these disturbances on the line of communication may be found in the system, adopted by the United States, of depending in war upon volunteers for a fixed period of time. This induced the necessity of discharging the first levy in the early part of the summer. But the immediate cause is to be seen in the discharge which actually took place forty days before the troops were entitled to it. By that discharge General Scott entailed upon himself the necessity of awaiting the arrival of the new regiments of regulars, and gave Santa Anna an opportunity of recovering from the effects of the battle of Cerro Gordo. The delay gave time for the negotiations at Puebla, and, through them, gave rise to the armistice of Tacubaya. Every great battle in which the American army was engaged after the 18th of April owed its necessity to the discharge of that body of troops from Jalapa; for General Scott at the time, after deducting the garrison of Vera Cruz,



had 12,000 men for the advance into the interior. Had he left 2000 effectives for the garrisons of Jalapa, Perote, and Puebla, with that reduction, and an estimate of 2000 for invalids and disabled soldiers, he would still have had 8000 men with which to have marched to Mexico. At the time no garrison of strength was in the city, no fortifications were erected, and nothing was prepared to oppose him. The capital could have at once been occupied and held, and an effective check would have been put to the gathering and organization of any large force of the enemy.

He did actually march on Mexico when it was fully prepared for defense, and had a garrison of 35,000, with an army of 10,500 soldiers. He had conquered, notwithstanding the sacrifice of every advantage as it was gained. Can it be doubted that he could have occupied it at once had he made the attempt? Fifteen days, at the utmost, were sufficient for the march from Jalapa to Mexico. Ten days would have been sufficient to have organized and located a garrison of 4000 men, which would have held the capital. The returning volunteers could have convoyed a train to Vera Cruz, while the garrisons on the route were temporarily re-enforced by the volunteers for the war. The new levies would have landed in time to have returned with the convoy from Vera Cruz, and to have supplied the places of the discharged troops.

It is true that if these movements had been made, Santa Anna would have been in position to

annoy and harass them, but whether they would have been as dangerous to the American cause as those which were put into execution is a question which requires little reflection for an answer; for the great battles would have been avoided, and the garrisons kept up on the line of communications.

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## CHAPTER XVI.

Delay in Movements of American Army—Organization of Mexican Government under Peña y Peña—Action of the new Government with reference to General Paredes—with reference to General Santa Anna—Removal of Seat of Government to Queretaro—Meeting of Mexican Congress—Difficulties of Mexican Government—Intrigues and Discussions in Congress—Election of President Añaya—Action of his Government—Appointment of Commissioners—Meeting of the Governors of States—Adjournment of Congress—Remarks.

As had been the case immediately after the consummation of previous great enterprises, the main American army was inactive for a long period subsequent to the fall of the Mexican capital, on account of circumstances and the policy adopted by the American functionaries, but principally on account of the scarcity of numbers. Time was therefore allowed the Mexican leaders to reorganize their government, which had been ended by the resignation of Santa Anna at Guadalupe Hidalgo. President, ministers, Legislature, and army—in fine, all the elements of Mexican national authority, were dissipated and dispersed over the whole extent of the country. Had the policy of the invad-

ers been that of conquest, and had they been in immediate present force, a few steps would have insured it. But the strength necessary for him to take those steps was not at the time at the disposal of the American general, nor did his own views counsel such action, if it had been. The somewhat anomalous spectacle was presented, partly from necessity and partly from intention, of a victorious army holding possession of the enemy's capital, and quietly watching the organization of a government which might, perhaps, conclude a treaty, if such were indeed the spirit of the Mexican nation and its leaders. The alternative was not regarded that this same government, if it became strong, might become the instrument of further troublesome hostilities, in case Mexican pride, caprice, intrigue, and falsehood should defeat negotiation, as they had done that conducted by Mr. Trist at the house of Alfaro. It is somewhat remarkable, so soon after the unfortunate result and termination of that discussion, that the American general and commissioner should have desired that the government which had so fully and completely deceived them should resuscitate itself. But so it was, and there was this in favor of the policy of permitting it: Santa Anna had given up his power, and another president, of a different order of talent, was at the head of affairs, if the Constitution of Mexico were adhered to in the succession which had been prescribed by the Constitution and by the decree of Santa Anna.



Señor Peña y Peña, the president of the Supreme Court of Justice, upon whom devolved the exercise of executive power, had been the minister of foreign relations under Herrera. Through his means, the attempt at settling the matters in controversy by the mission of Mr. Slidell had been brought about. There existed but little doubt as to his inclination to conclude a treaty, although there was much as to his power to make such a peace as would be acceptable to the United States. His inclination alone, however, was more favorable to the ends of the American government than was that of any agitator who might attempt to seize what power remained, or might be saved to the executive of a Mexican government, for the old method of securing favor by an appeal to the national prejudices and the necessity of maintaining Mexican honor was adopted by the chiefs of military factions. Had they once succeeded, the slight hope which remained of peace, and which the American general was willing to cherish, was gone.

The organization of Peña y Peña's government was commenced at Toluca on the 27th of September, 1847. On that day the President addressed a circular to the governors of the several states, announcing his assumption of power and the partial formation of a cabinet, by the appointment of Don Luis de la Rosa as minister of foreign and internal relations. A second circular of the same date, over Rosa's signature, contained what was called the "programme" of the new administration. It

was chiefly an avowal of liberal principles in the administration of internal affairs, and of a desire to save the nation from the fate which evidently awaited her, should she remain in the state in which she was, without any organized government. It was more calculated to obtain the support of the different state authorities than to set forth any immediate policy in relation to the question of hostilities with the United States. Indeed, the only portion of the circular of either president or minister which contained any allusion to the matter was in that of Rosa, which, among other things, restored the freedom of the press. In that there can only be seen an intention to admit the consideration of the question.

“ His Excellency the Provisional President earnestly desires to have a thorough knowledge of the true opinion of the nation with respect to the momentous questions to which the war of invasion has given rise. As the press is the principal organ of that opinion, his excellency would desire that the liberty of the press should be subjected to no other restrictions than such as morality and public order require.”

Such strength as the newly-established government could derive from the recognition of the representatives of the different neutral nations present in Mexico was gained at once ; but its position was far from being secure against internal enemies, even in the event of its being undisturbed by the invading army. The various factions which had

distracted Mexico during the whole war, and even while the enemy was at the gates of the capital, did not cease their quarrels after the consummation of his success. The first measures taken by Rosa in his new capacity were for preventing the chance of the overthrow of the new government by a domestic military force.

The first agitator who received attention was General Paredes, who had returned from his exile, and was quite willing to seize any opportunity which might present itself for furthering his scheme of establishing a monarchy. He had not been idle during his absence, most of which he had spent at Paris. It is beyond doubt that he received no little verbal encouragement while at the court of St. Cloud, and the intrigues which he soon set on foot prove that he intended to act upon it. He quitted Europe soon after hearing the news of the American victory of Cerro Gordo, and for the alleged purpose of assisting in fighting the battles of his country.\* It is, however, more probable that he came on account of the unpopularity which, it might well be believed, would, after that event, attach to Santa Anna. In that unpopularity his downfall might have been confidently anticipated, and in the ensuing anarchy Paredes could take the chances of revolution, and could renew the consideration of his schemes.

He landed at Vera Cruz from a British packet on the 14th of August, under an assumed name,

\* Manifesto of General Paredes, Tulancingo, September 29th, 1847.



and made good his escape from the city within ten minutes, and before the governor was aware of his arrival.\* After the fall of the city of Mexico, he offered his services to the government for the purpose of conducting military operations against the Americans ; but Peña y Peña's administration treated him with neglect, which Paredes ascribed, and perhaps very truly, to the fact that the Provisional President had been the chief actor in the attempted negotiations with the United States while minister of relations under Herrera's administration, and to the revolution which, headed by Paredes, had thrust his faction from power. Whether the motive were or were not that of revenge, the administration of Peña y Peña did not commit the error of fostering the aspirant who had before overthrown the government, while it was attempting to save the country from the evils of war. Rosa issued an order to the various governors and comandantes generales of the different states that he should be seized wherever he could be found, and reshipped into exile.† If that were impracticable, he was to be conducted a prisoner to Acapulco, the favorite depôt for refractory Mexican politicians. The effect of this order was to force Paredes to confine his intrigues to private circles, inasmuch as he was not placed in command of any body of troops, and had no opportunity for working upon those fa-

\* Correspondence, Colonel Wilson and others. Executive Document, No. 60, House of Representatives, first Session of the thirtieth Congress, p. 787-798.

† Manifesto of General Paredes.

vorably disposed to the existing government. So much of the order as related to his seizure was not executed, nor is it known whether it was attempted to carry it into effect.

The second and most important of the military chieftains who were proceeded against was Santa Anna. On the 7th of October a communication was addressed him from Toluca by Rosa, in which he was ordered to give up the command of his troops, for reasons so various and so remarkable that they will best appear in the words of the dispatch.

“His Excellency the Señor Provisional President of the Republic, feeling profoundly his duties to his country, convinced of the necessity of establishing in the nation public morality, and of giving more energy to the discipline of the army, almost extinguished by our civil dissensions; desiring, moreover, to manifest to the people of the city of Mexico and other points now in possession of the enemy that their lot is not indifferent to his excellency; considering, in fine, that in every country, well organized, the generals of an army answer before a tribunal for the faults which they have committed, and even for the misfortunes which have befallen their campaigns, has resolved that your excellency deliver up the command of the army to his Excellency the General of Division Don Manuel Rincon, and, until that chief may present himself to receive it, temporarily to his Excellency General Don Juan Alvarez.”

The dispatch concluded by directing the ex-president to fix his residence at such point as he pleased, until a council of war could be ordered to investigate his case. It was received by Santa Anna soon after the affair at Huamantla, and the celerity which he showed in obeying its dictates goes far to induce the belief that he was quite willing to give up the command of which he was deprived, even if it had been any thing substantial, which, in the beaten and disorganized state of his forces, it was not. Having reoccupied Huamantla after Lane's advance from that place on the 16th of October, Santa Anna issued an address to his troops, in which his patriotism and delicacy were set forth as his reasons for obedience. But, probably in return for the various uncomplimentary innuendoes concerning his public immorality and his military incapacity which Señor Rosa had treated him to, he endeavored to show that much blame must fall upon the new government for displacing him from the command at the moment when he was about entering upon successful operations.

"When we anticipated," said he, "obtaining a triumph for the country over our invaders, according to the combinations to which you are no strangers, and while I was exclusively occupied in carrying on hostilities against the enemy, as you well know, which object alone brought us in this direction, I received the surprising communication of Don Luis de la Rosa, Minister of State and War, in which he informs me that, by order of his Ex-



cellency the President of the Supreme Court of Justice, charged with the supreme executive power by the appointment which I made to that effect in my decree of the 16th of last September, I am to deliver the command of this body of troops to his Excellency General of Division Don Manuel Rincon, or to Don Juan Alvarez of the same rank." To finish his address by another blow upon the administration of Peña y Peña, which, however much it was intended to prove his patriotism, said little for his discipline, if the order were such as required obedience, he said, "I depart from you and the theater of war perhaps to sacrifice myself to the vengeance of my enemies, or to effect an inglorious peace, which I did not wish to grant, because it was repugnant to my conscience." With this, Santa Anna retired to Tehuacan, in the State of Oajaca, and for a time refrained from meddling with public affairs.

In the mean time, the seat of the Mexican government had been removed to Queretaro, and the Congress had been summoned to meet at that place. The two principal personages who had been disposed of were not all, however, who interfered with the speedy and complete establishment of the power of the new administration, or the adoption of its proposed course of policy. General Bustamente, during the continuance of the struggle about the capital, had been in the western departments in command of a considerable force. By the destruction and dispersion of Santa Anna's

army, he found himself at the head of the most respectable body of troops in the republic. It was intact, had never met the American troops, and, being at the greatest distance from them, was most formidable to any party of its own countrymen against whom its leaders saw fit to pronounce. As all great Mexican chieftains are accustomed to do, Bustamente likewise issued his proclamation. In it the evils and misfortunes of the war were laid at the doors of the generals charged with the conduct of it, and it was intimated in pretty positive terms that, in the opinion of the proclaimer, he was able to conduct it to a glorious issue. At the same time, he deplored the fate which had separated him from that portion of the army which had been called to meet the invaders.

Bustamente commenced to approximate his troops to Queretaro, and it was believed for a time that he would overturn the new administration, if it attempted any negotiation for peace.

By the latter part of October a quorum of Mexican deputies had assembled at the new seat of government. Thither, too, had flocked a host of intriguants for the different candidates for the office of president *ad interim*, which that body was about to elect. Crowds of needy officers, soliciting pay and employment, thronged about the city, and being anxious to demonstrate their patriotism, and, moreover, fearful lest the conclusion of a treaty of peace would do away with the necessity of their services, they were strong in their denunciations

of any peaceful consideration. In the natural course of things, they sided with the partisans of those candidates who endeavored to secure popularity by loud-mouthed exclamations concerning the honor of the country, and the necessity of continuing the war at all hazards and to all lengths.

In the turmoil and confusion, many deputies became nervous concerning their own responsibility, and left the city for a time. The transaction of business was delayed. In the interval, before Congress could be reassembled, Peña y Peña added to his cabinet by appointing General Mora y Villamil Minister of War and Marine. That officer was known to be strongly in favor of peace.

To strengthen the government, a Congress of the governors of the different federal states was summoned to meet at Queretaro, in order that counsel might be given in reference to the course of policy to be pursued with regard to the reorganization of the government of the Union, and to the question of peace or war.

This was necessary on the former point, for various objections, not without foundation, had been raised on the part of the different oppositions to the tenure by which Peña y Peña held the executive authority, and he was by no means strong enough to disregard them; but, before the governors had assembled, affairs had become so far quiet in Queretaro that a sufficient number of deputies for the transaction of business returned thither, and Congress commenced its sessions.



The first duty which devolved upon it was the election of a Provisional President, to serve until the 8th of January, the period fixed upon for counting the votes given for the Constitutional President of the Republic. So soon as it had entered upon this duty, political strife was as high as ever. Some five or six candidates were in the field, each with powerful supporters. The partisans of Santa Anna were busily at work, with the apparent intention of ruining the enemies of their chieftain if it were impossible to perpetuate his power, and consorted with one faction or another, as was for the time most consistent with such an end.

The two greatest parties were the Puros and the Moderados. The Puros had no particular fixed policy in regard to either peace or war. Some of their leaders desired a perpetuation of the war, because of the ancient popularity of the cry of resistance to the invaders, and a dislike to relinquish so excellent a theme for treatises and discussions. Others desired it as a means of forcing the United States to take the whole country. In the violence of political hatred, others again appeared to have forgotten the presence of the invading army in the capital of the republic, and only talked of their old party issues.

The Moderados were to a great extent supporters of Peña y Peña, and were in favor of peace, if it could be made on any thing like advantageous terms. Still, even they talked loudly and in Mex-

ican style of the necessity of sustaining the honor of the country.

The various political discussions delayed action on the principal point of duty until November. By the 11th of that month, the claims of the rivals having been discussed, the Moderados settled upon one candidate. A few Puros joined them, and General Añaya was elected to the office for the short space which intervened before the 8th of January. The event caused great umbrage among the mass of the Puros, and many deputies threatened to withdraw from Congress, and thereby put a stop to its discussions and session. Nevertheless, the threat was not carried out, and Añaya entered upon the duties of the executive.

In the address of the new President, his policy, with reference to the question of peace or war, was not disclosed, except in so far that he declared that he had taken the office with a firm determination never to seal the dishonor of his native land. The reply from the president of Congress avowed nothing more positive as the sentiment of that body. So far as any thing distinctly expressed was concerned, the inclination of either President or Legislature in reference to peace or war was an open question.

Añaya's acts, however, soon spoke more plainly on the subject. In the formation of his cabinet he retained Peña y Peña, Rosa, and Mora y Villamil, who were compromised in favor of negotiations. Bustamente was appointed the command-

er-in-chief of the army, which was the effectual way of securing him and his command to the support of the government.

A short correspondence had taken place between Señor Rosa and Mr. Trist on the subject of negotiations,\* and it was generally stated and believed that Peña y Peña had been upon the point of naming commissioners to conclude a treaty. Añaya carried out the measure, and in the latter part of November they were actually appointed. At the time it may have been a measure of policy on his part, similar to that which Santa Anna had adopted during the armistice. Subsequent events, however, prove that the disposition of the other authorities of the government was favorable to the negotiation.

But few demonstrations of popular or legislative approbation of the measure had been manifested. Indeed, so far as the popular voice had any thing to do with the decision, it was almost invariably raised against any thing of the kind. Pronunciamientos in favor of the war were rife in every department, and in Oajaca, Jalisco, and Guanajuato they ended in something like revolutions, inasmuch as a few shots were fired and a few discontented spirits were slain.

From Tulancingo, Paredes came out with a manifesto, endeavoring to keep alive the spirit of war. He pronounced in favor of the plan of Iguala, his long-cherished scheme.

\* Correspondence. Executive Document, No. 52, Senate, first Session of the thirtieth Congress, p. 229.



Santa Anna, too, added his manifesto to keep up the excitement, and from his retirement at Tehuacan strove to vindicate his conduct, and to render that of existing authorities unpopular.

The state of affairs within the vicinity of Queretaro was no better than that existing without. The opposition of the Puros, which had been so noisily set forth in their avowed determination to break up Congress by departing, had taken the turn of fierce discussion. Various resolutions concerning the honor of Mexico and the necessity of prolonging the war were introduced, debated, and disposed of in different ways. One set, the most violent in favor of war, and which declared that it was dishonorable and inexpedient to sell any part of the national territory, and which denounced any authorities who should attempt it as traitors, was rejected. This was conceived to be a strong demonstration in favor of peace.

Nothing further was effected in Congress upon the great question, so far as its public proceedings went. On internal affairs and the organization of the government many projects were discussed, and adopted or rejected. These caused no little turmoil and confusion in the chaos of politics, but were of little interest to any save Mexicans.

A proposition was made by one of the deputies, which was, perhaps, as well suited as any which could be made to the situation of the country at the time. It was rejected with indignation. Its end was for a dissolution of the federal compact,

and for allowing every state to take care of itself. This was about the existing state of things, except that the American army was taking care of a goodly number, and several of the remainder were in a state of anarchy and confusion.

The army was also a subject of discussion, and various plans were proposed to increase it. The great obstacle to the success of any of them was the want of funds. There was not a sufficiency of them to pay what troops were still with their colors, to say nothing of the hungry swarms of officers at Queretaro.

The governors of the states had met as they had been summoned, but they were no more positive in their advice or their acts than was the national Congress. They first put two questions to the government (then Peña y Peña's), to which they demanded immediate and explicit replies.

1st. In what character they had been called together, and whether the government would submit to their decision ?

2d. Will the government make known with clearness and frankness the programme of its policy with regard to peace or war ?

In reply to these questions, it was stated on the part of the government that they had been summoned in the character of advisers ; that the government would be able, in some measure, to submit to their decision ; and that it was more inclined to open or continue negotiations than to prosecute the war.

Upon this, the first avowal of policy, the governors commenced and continued their discussions with but little unity or effect. Finally, about the middle of December, they broke up, having arrived at the conclusion that they would support the general government in the discharge of its duties to the extent of the constitutional means demanded of them. This somewhat unnecessary declaration, had the Mexican government been firmly established, was, nevertheless, of considerable importance as the case stood, for it was not always that they were willing to do as much, even where it was expressly laid down as their duty.

About the time of the adjournment of that council, Congress too began to fall away. Hardly a sufficient number of deputies were left for the transaction of ordinary business, and finally the body broke up and adjourned. All things of importance were left to be disposed of by the succeeding Congress, which was to meet in January.

Something had been gained toward the conclusion of a treaty. The administrations of Peña y Peña and Añaya had been reorganized as the constitutional government of Mexico from September, 1847, to January, 1848. During that period it was generally believed that they were inclined to negotiate. The avowal of such inclination had been once distinctly and publicly made, and the commissioners on the part of Mexico were actually appointed. No administration had ever attempted or effected any thing of the kind since the com-



mencement of the war. The fact that these two were able to remain in power, even nominally, against the almost innumerable intrigues and elements of discord which existed, showed plainly that the first step had been taken in good faith, and that the consideration of the subject had at last been consented to. With Mexico, and nations such as Mexico, this has always been a most difficult matter of diplomacy.

But, saving this and the appointment of commissioners, Señores Conto, Cuevas, and Atristain, nothing definite on the question of peace or war was effected by the governments of Peña y Peña and Añaya. The action of the commissioners was delayed from different causes.

## CHAPTER XVII.

American Military Action after the Fall of Mexico—Policy of General Scott—Disposition of Troops on Line of Communication—His intended Action—Correspondence—Instructions from Washington—Military Contributions—Recall of Mr. Trist—Action of General Scott—of Mr. Trist—Quarrels among General Officers—General Order, No. 349—Causes—Observations—Movement of Re-enforcements from Vera Cruz—Arrival at Mexico—Affair of Matamoras—Intended Expeditions to Zacatecas and San Luis—Unauthorized Negotiations—Delay of Expeditions—Reasons—Observations—Occupation of Pachuca—Reorganization of the Army—Occupation of Toluca—of Cuernavaca—Guerilla Robbery at Santa Fé—Expeditions to Tehuacan and Orizaba—Conclusion of Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo—Observations—Recall of General Scott.

THE first disposition of troops made by General Scott after the capture of Mexico was for the purpose of securing his line of communications, which had been so long neglected. Prior to the 13th of October he had been employed in arranging the internal affairs of his army, and in preparing his official reports of the battles and operations in the valley. The occupation of the city was undisturbed, except by a few unimportant riots, which were quickly quelled. The troops were engaged in the work of refitting and repair. The hospitals of the army were established, and attendance in some sort was afforded to the sick and wounded, of which they had received but a meager share for the first days subsequent to the battles. Subsistence for the small number of troops of which the American army was composed was easily obtained. All the difficulties which had been experienced in

raising money on the lower points of the route had vanished. Drafts on the United States sold readily and at a high premium.

The government of the city was intrusted to General Quitman, but the Mexican civil authorities were retained in their places under him. The usual regulations and revenue laws were enforced with slight modifications.

The policy of General Scott with regard to the continuation of the war continued to be the same as that which he had pursued from the time of leaving Puebla. He was without definite instructions, and was without the necessary means of attempting any immediate offensive military operation. The wish that the Mexican government should become sufficiently firm in its establishment to enable it to make a treaty of peace appears to have been predominant. For furthering that end, and for the demonstration of a spirit of conciliation, Generals Rincon and Añaya, both members of the Mexican Congress, were liberated without parole.

During the month of October it was rumored in Mexico that General Taylor had advanced from the north as far as San Luis Potosi, and it was feared that he might be forced to continue his march to the capital. Under this supposition, General Scott sent him instructions to leave the city of Queretaro to his right, in order that he might not disturb the elements of peace collecting at that point.\*

\* General Scott to General Pillow, October 3d, 1847. Executive Docu-



The information possessed of the state of affairs upon the route to Vera Cruz was almost entirely unofficial, and most of it came through Mexican channels. By the 13th of October the accounts of a large column of troops being on its way to reinforce the main army became so authentic, that General Scott issued a circular letter to the unknown commanders of them concerning their distribution. Two or three posts, of from 500 to 750 men each, were to be established between Vera Cruz and Jalapa. Jalapa was to be garrisoned with a force of from 1200 to 2000. The force at Puebla was to be increased to the same number. If, after these dispositions, any surplus remained, it was to await the orders of the general-in-chief at the latter city.\*

On the 27th of October he wrote to the War Department, transmitting the reports of the affairs at Huamantla and Puebla (which had reached him in the interval), and the circular of instructions. In the accompanying letter, the movements which he had in contemplation, as those which were immediately to succeed those which he had ordered, were set forth as follows :

“After establishing the new posts below, as indicated in my circular letter of instructions (October 13th), I hope to have the means of occupying Atlixco, some eighteen miles from Puebla, and

ment, No. 60, House of Representatives, first Session of the thirtieth Congress, p. 1017.

\* Executive Document, No. 60, House of Representatives, first Session of the thirtieth Congress, p. 1028.

Toluca, the state capital of Mexico, forty miles hence, and perhaps Orizaba, but probably shall not attempt any more distant expedition without further re-enforcements, or until I shall have received the views of the department submitted in my report (No. 34) of the 18th ultimo.

“There is still some slight hope that negotiations for a peace may soon be renewed, but on this subject Mr. Trist, our commissioner, will no doubt fully report to the State Department.”\*

About the last of October, a column of troops, in escort of a large train of empty wagons, marched to Vera Cruz for the purpose of bringing up supplies of munitions and clothing. With it went home many officers of different grades (wounded, disabled, and supernumerary). Among them was General Quitman, who was succeeded in his duties as governor of Mexico by General P. F. Smith. Quitman's division of volunteers was broken up, and the different regiments were temporarily assigned to the first and second divisions of regulars.

The ensuing month was one of inactivity at the American head-quarters, and nothing was attempted which might materially affect the question of peace or war in the way of military operations. On the 17th and 18th of November, however, dispatches arrived from Washington which put the general-in-chief in possession of the views of his

\* Executive Document, No 60, House of Representatives, first Session of the thirtieth Congress, p. 1027.

government in relation to future action, and also of information of the recall of Mr. Trist.

Since the issue of instructions relative to raising military contributions, the authorities at Washington had awaited the result of the experiment, and the effect which it might have upon the enemy. The dispatches of General Scott from Jalapa had, however, put an end to any anticipations of present effect from direct contributions. It was intended, nevertheless, that the system should be carried out at the earliest practicable moment, and upon the 1st of September, Mr. Mason, at the time Acting Secretary of War, wrote to the general-in-chief, giving him renewed instructions upon the subject. They were based upon the belief then entertained that General Scott had succeeded, or would soon succeed, in his attempt upon the capital. The matter was treated of at some length as follows :

“The obstinate persistence of the Mexicans in refusing to treat, their utter disregard of the rules of civilized warfare, and the large expenditures which we are compelled to make, has impressed on the President the firm conviction that those rights of exacting contributions from the enemy, which are conferred by the acknowledged law of nations, should be exercised. Your remarks in your dispatch, No. 28, dated at Jalapa, May 20th, 1847, have been carefully observed. Your circumstances are since materially changed ; and if, as we doubt not, you have triumphantly entered the city of Mexico, the President directs me to call your at-



tention to the dispatch from this department of the 3d of April last, a copy of which is herewith inclosed. The property-holders of Mexico have no claim to find in the market afforded by sales to our army an actual pecuniary benefit resulting from the war. They must be made to feel its evils; and it is earnestly hoped and expected that you will not find, in your present circumstances, a necessity to adhere to your opinion expressed in your dispatch referred to, that a resort to forced contributions will exasperate and ruin the inhabitants, and starve the army. Contributions may be exacted from cities, or states, or wealthy individuals, and payment made for provisions and other supplies brought to the camp, or collected in kind. It is not improbable that men of wealth and means may profess to belong mainly to the peace party; and it may be apprehended that they will be driven from their pacific position by coercive proceedings. But, however such an effect may be apprehended, it is more probable that their exertions to promote a termination of the war will be made more serious and efficient when they feel the oppressive evils of the state of war. Judging from the cruelties and atrocities which are reported in different parts of Mexico to have been inflicted by the Mexicans, whenever an opportunity presents itself, on a soldier or weaker party, there is no hope of their reciprocating kind, generous, or humane exercise of the rights of war on our part; and, without retaliating such disgraceful atrocities in kind, every

dictate of duty to ourselves requires that we should not abstain from the exercise of our rights of exaction from the enemy. The mode and extent of exercising this right is, and must be, left to your discretion, but it is earnestly hoped that you will put the system into operation to the utmost practicable extent. The safety and subsistence of the troops under your command will, of course, not be placed in jeopardy by the desire to enforce this system, if you find that in its exercise such a result will follow.”\*

On the 6th of October, and before any official dispatch of the operations about Mexico had reached the War Department, Mr. Marcy, depending on such information as he had received through unofficial channels, wrote at length on the method of prosecuting the war in future. As every overture of peace had been met by Mexico with a refusal, and as the last had been repaid by the bad faith displayed by the Mexican authorities in the negotiations pending the armistice of Tacubaya, the general tenor of the instructions was, that increased severity should be used against the enemy, and especially the guerilleros. The additional instructions in regard to contributions are contained in the following extract:

“Permit me to invite your attention to the dispatch from this department of the 1st ultimo (a copy of which is herewith sent), and urge the sug-

\* Executive Document, No. 60, House of Representatives, first Session of the thirtieth Congress, p. 1005.

gestions therein contained upon your particular consideration. The burden of sustaining our forces in Mexico must be thrown upon the people of that country. Its resources should be resorted to in every manner consistent with the usages of civilized war for that purpose, and it is hoped that your situation is such as will warrant you in making this resort at least to the extent required for the support of our army. The men of means who have willingly contributed aid to support the Mexican army, should be forced to contribute to the support of ours.”\*

With these dispatches from the War Department came others from Mr. Buchanan, Secretary of State, to Mr. Trist. Mexican accounts of the negotiations, carried on at the house of Alfaro, were received in Washington by the 6th of October. The surprise and indignation of the President and cabinet at the manner in which they had been conducted on the part of the Mexicans, and especially at the counter projet of their commissioners, was extreme. The statement which was made concerning an offer to submit the question of the territory between the Nueces and Rio Grande to the government at Washington, having been made by Mr. Trist, was not at first credited. As it was evident that but little was to be hoped from the Mexican government if it continued in its previous course of action, it was believed that

\* Executive Document, No. 60, House of Representatives, first Session of the thirtieth Congress, p. 1007.



the continuance of the commissioner at the headquarters of the army could be productive of no good. He was therefore recalled. In case he had concluded a treaty at the time of the receipt of the letter, he was instructed to bring it with him to Washington. If he were in negotiations at the time, they were to be broken off at once, and the commissioner was not to delay his departure to await the communication of any terms which might be offered on the part of Mexico.\*

By the 25th of October Mr. Trist's accounts of his proceedings were received, and the truth of the statement of his offer was ascertained. His course of action was entirely disapproved, and by the direction of the President his recall was reiterated.†

It was intended that the military commander should thenceforward be the channel of communication between the belligerents, and in the dispatch of October 6th Mr. Marcy directed General Scott to notify the Mexican government of Mr. Trist's recall. In reference to any renewal of negotiations, he was instructed as follows :

“Should they offer, through you, terms of accommodation, or propose to enter into negotiations, the President directs that such propositions be forwarded without delay to him ; but it is not expected that your movements or measures for

\* Mr. Buchanan to Mr. Trist, October 6th, 1847. Executive Document, No. 52, Senate, first Session of the thirtieth Congress, p. 91.

† Executive Document, No. 52, Senate, first Session of the thirtieth Congress, p. 94.

carrying on hostilities will be relaxed, or in any way changed.”\*

General Scott soon took certain steps in obedience to his instructions. His first order for the commencement of the new system was issued on the 25th of November. By its provisions, the exportation of uncoined bullion, bars or ingots of the precious metals, was prohibited until the orders of the government at Washington could be made known. As the beginning of levying contributions, the payment of rent for any buildings, either public or private, required as quarters or storehouses for the army, was forbidden.†

As no re-enforcements had arrived at the capital by the end of November, the strength with which to press hostile operations was wanting. The present inability was announced to the War Department by the general-in-chief, in his dispatch dated November 27th.‡

In the mean while, and soon after Mr. Trist had received his letter of recall, the Mexican commissioners appointed by President Añaya arrived in the city of Mexico. The American commissioner did but little to obey Mr. Buchanan's instructions. It is true that on the 27th he wrote that he was about to return to the United States,§ but on the

\* Executive Document, No. 60, House of Representatives, first Session of the thirtieth Congress, p. 1009.

† General Orders, No. 358.

‡ Executive Document, No. 60, House of Representatives, first Session of the thirtieth Congress, p. 1031.

§ Executive Document, No. 52, Senate, first Session of the thirtieth Congress, p. 96.

day after the receipt of his letters he sent information of the state of things to Queretaro by Mr. Thornton, the acting British chargé d'affaires.\* On the 24th he wrote to a confidential friend that, if the Mexican government would make and carry through a treaty of peace on the basis of the projet originally proposed, he was resolved and committed to carry it home with him.†

Whether this positive disobedience was counseled by the general-in-chief is questionable. On the 4th of December he wrote to the Secretary of War that Mr. Trist would go down in the next train.‡ He may have so understood it, but, in place of Mr. Trist, the next train took down a lengthy epistle from that functionary to the Secretary of State, explanatory of his proceedings, laudatory of his own diplomatic talent, of General Scott's military action and general capabilities, of the great stroke of policy (in his asserted opinion) of the Tacubaya armistice, and announcing in positive terms his intention of disobeying the orders of his government.§ Some of the most striking paragraphs of his letter were denunciatory of a general officer to whom he believed he owed his recall. Their exceeding bitterness, which, if any thing, surpassed that demonstrated in his correspondence

\* Executive Document, No. 52, Senate, first Session of the thirtieth Congress, p. 100.

† Idem.

‡ Executive Document, No. 60, House of Representatives, first Session of the 30th Congress, p. 1034.

§ Executive Document, No. 52, Senate, first Session of the thirtieth Congress, p. 231-266.



with General Scott during the early part of his Mexican career, would go far toward showing that he had much to do in bringing about an unfortunate controversy which occurred a short time previous to the date of his letter.

In his letter of the 27th of November to Mr. Marcy, General Scott wrote, in reference to the duties which devolved upon him with reference to peace, after announcing the fact of the appointment of Mexican commissioners, as follows: "These commissioners are understood to be now in this city, but they have not called on me or submitted to me any proposition whatever, although the government at Queretaro has been informed that I shall at all times be ready to send home any communication looking to a renewal of negotiations from that government. It is doubtful, however, I learn indirectly, whether the Mexican government or its commissioners will adopt that course."\*

In reference to his proposed movements upon the arrival of re-enforcements, of the approach of which under Generals Butler and Patterson he had received official information, he said, "On his (General Butler's) or Major-general Patterson's arrival here with 4000 or more re-enforcements, over and above the eastern garrisons, I shall dispatch the surplus, or a force equal to it, to occupy the mining districts within — miles of Zacatecas; and, should the surplus be sufficient, I shall also occupy

\* Executive Document, No. 60, House of Representatives, first Session of the thirtieth Congress, p. 1031.

the mining district of San Luis de Potosi, unless propositions of peace on the part of Mexico, of such a character as to give strong probability of their acceptance by our government, combined with an evident steadiness of purpose at Queretaro, may probably cause me not to disturb the government at that place, but to pass it some distance to the right and left."\*

The views which were expressed at the time in reference to the collection of revenue were of some length, but they were not considered definite, as indeed they could not be, for but little time had been devoted to the study of the question.

None of the proposed operations were, however, carried out, and the extracts quoted can only be taken as many others, as avowals of intentions. That expressed of leaving the city of Queretaro on the right and left, shows that the continuance of negotiations, in the face of the orders and policy of the government at Washington, was still anxiously desired, and that it was to be promoted even at the expense and detriment of the proper military measures of occupation. If the expeditions to Zacatecas and San Luis had been sent forward, and the government at Queretaro, with the corps of Mexican troops in its vicinity, had been neglected, the communication of both with the main army would have been cut off. Larger columns than could well have been spared would have been re-

\* Executive Document, No. 60, House of Representatives, first Session of the thirtieth Congress, p. 1032.

quired to keep it open, provided the Mexican government continued hostile. Experience had shown that dependence was not to be placed upon apparent steadiness of purpose on its part.

It had been intended to dispatch a second train to Vera Cruz about the 1st of December, but reinforcements did not arrive at the head-quarters of the army, and on account of the small numerical force present, the movement was delayed. There were but about 6000 men fit for duty in Mexico and Chapultepec. Another reason for the delay may be seen in the state of things which existed in reference to good feeling among general officers. Before the 1st of December, difficulties and disputes, which had been for some time in progress, broke out between the general-in-chief and his highest officers. With almost any other army, under ordinary circumstances, they would have gone far to produce serious disasters. As it was, they did produce a state of things more akin to the anarchy which reigned at Queretaro than that harmony and concord which should characterize the conduct and management of an army in an enemy's country.

General Scott had experienced some difficulty in making out his official reports of the operations of his army in the valley. In his drafts many things were set down as having been executed in obedience to his orders, which in the reports of his subordinates were attributed to fortune, or to their own immediate conduct of the troops upon the



field. Some matters which had been of the greatest importance in securing the victory in particular operations, General Scott claimed exclusively. His subordinates gave an entirely different version of them. The differences were particularly apparent in the reports of Generals Worth, Pillow, and Quitman. Twiggs was the only one of the four generals of division with whom the general-in-chief had no dispute upon the subject. Immediately after the entrance into the capital, it was apparent that General Scott was determined to insist upon appropriating to himself the principal glory of all the operations. It may be regarded as a needless measure on his part that he attempted to secure it, for all history might have told him that the greater portion invariably falls to the lot of the commander. It may be, that all which could be appropriated was deemed to be necessary for political effect, and as an offset to what might be unpopular in the conduct of the campaign, especially to the Tacubaya armistice.

The quarrel with Worth took place but a short time after the occupation of Mexico. While speaking of the operations of his division at the garita San Cosme, that officer was rebuked by the general-in-chief for his claim to have been the first in the city. Worth's fiery spirit would not brook the reproof; and although an explanation was made by General Scott, yet, as many causes of difference of an anterior date remained to be explained, the remembrance of which had been previously sacri-

ficed to the necessities of the service, he refused such as was offered. Friendly intercourse between the two ceased from that time.

About the 1st of October a correspondence passed between Generals Scott and Pillow, in which the attention of the latter was called to what was denominated errors in his official reports. He was requested to make changes which would give the credit of ordering certain important movements to the general-in-chief. The spirit of the whole correspondence on the part of General Scott, and the desire which prompted its commencement, is seen in the following extract from his letter to General Pillow of the 2d of October :

“General S. is sorry to perceive in General P.’s report of September 18th a seeming effort, no doubt unintentional, to leave General S. entirely out of the operations of September 13th.”\*

In the continuation of the correspondence, General Pillow stated that the facts, as originally set forth in his reports, were, according to his belief, true. He recounted the occurrences at some length, and stated the corroborating circumstances. With these, nevertheless, he waived his recollection of the facts in deference to that of General Scott, on account of the friendship which had hitherto existed between them. He changed his reports in the particulars which General Scott desired, although some, which in his opinion were erroneous, in ref-

\* Correspondence. Executive Document, No. 60, House of Representatives, first Session of the thirtieth Congress, p. 1015-1020.

erence to the operations at Contreras, were left unaltered. Accompanied by the explanations as they were, the alterations were not acceptable, and on the 4th of October the general-in-chief broke off the correspondence, which had, until that time, been friendly and complimentary on the part of both officers, by a strictly formal note, in style and manner the very reverse of those which had previously passed.

The difference with Quitman related to his operations at the garita Belen. In the report of the general-in-chief he was immediately charged with haste and imprudence, if not disobedience of orders. It was stated that certain orders had been repeatedly sent to him, during the afternoon of the 13th of September, in order to prevent his too rapid advance, and that he had been informed that his operations were to be a diversion in favor of Worth's assault.\* Quitman had never received the orders, and searched in vain to find the staff officer who had borne them. His correspondence with the general-in-chief upon the subject was courteous, but he took the first opportunity of leaving the country, on account of the inadequacy of his command to his rank of major general.

Were any evidence wanting to show the incoherency of many of the military operations of the American army, the disputes of the general-in-chief with three generals of division would be fully suf-

\* Official Report. Executive Document, No. 1, Senate, first Session of the thirtieth Congress, p. 382.



ficient. It might well have been expected that discrepancies upon minor points would have existed in some cases; but where the differences were so many and so material, there must have been bases for the claims of the subordinate generals. The fear which General Scott manifested in his correspondence with Pillow that he should be left entirely out of the operations of the 13th, proved that he was not altogether satisfied with the share which he had had in their direction. In their execution he certainly had none, for he was, at the time, at a distance of one and a half miles, at Tacubaya. This, with the meager credit which was given to Worth, in an inaccurate statement of his operations at San Cosme, in which the credit of first entering the city was given in greater part to Quitman, and the indirect censure of the latter general, would go to induce the belief that General Scott feared that the glory of his subordinates would surpass his own. That this was the case was more fully demonstrated during the month of November.

On the 22d of October, a mail from the United States, which had come up with Lane's command, reached the city of Mexico. In it were contained various newspapers, all full of the news of the battles of the 19th and 20th of August. Of original communications from the army there were but few. One of these, which was laudatory of General Pillow, having been rendered ridiculous by the interpolations of editors in New Orleans, was the sub-

ject of much criticism. No action upon the subject was taken until the following month by the general-in-chief.\*

About the 10th of November a mail came through from Tampico, and in a newspaper published at that place was a copy of a letter from the army, originally published in the United States. This was concerning the operations of Worth's division, and the credit of different matters was given in great part to that general.† The facts concerning the adoption of the Chalco route were set forth at some length; and as it appeared from the account that General Scott had been induced to take this first important step toward the reduction of Mexico, and to abandon the project, at first entertained, of attacking Mexicalcingo, by the representations and at the instance of General Worth, and on information, the result of Lieutenant-colonel Duncan's reconnaissance, the attention of the general-in-chief was at once aroused.

The letter brought out General Order No. 349,‡ in which an order from the War Department, strictly forbidding the writing of letters by officers of the army, which might find their way to the public press, until one month after the termination of the campaign to which they related, was quoted. In the order of the general-in-chief, the two letters which had been received were denounced as "scan-

\* Executive Document, No. 65, Senate, first Session of the thirtieth Congress, p. 385.

† Washington Union, September 29th, 1847.

‡ Executive Document, No. 65, Senate, first Session of the thirtieth Congress, p. 454.

dalous," "infamous," and "despicable," with various other qualifications of their character. The great cause of difficulty was that, in the order, Generals Pillow and Worth were charged with having written, or caused to be written, the two letters, for the purpose of "puffing themselves," and "malignantly excluding others," in insinuations so strong that it was impossible to mistake them. As the authors of the letters, they were characterized as "conceited" and "envious." Being thus publicly and unscrupulously held up to the indignation of the army, the two generals then next in rank to the general-in-chief would not rest quiet under the imputations. Both at once addressed letters demanding an explanation. None was given in the answers of the acting assistant adjutant general, although, in that to General Worth, it was intimated that the order referred to the letter signed "Leonidas," which had been published in New Orleans, and in those to both Worth and Pillow it was admitted that the general-in-chief had no legal proof concerning the authorship of either of the denounced productions.

This being the case, it was evident that, under the apprehension lest these accounts of the battles in the valley of Mexico should give too much glory to his subordinates, the general-in-chief had taken the step of appealing to the popular sentiment of his army against the supposed conduct of the two officers next in rank to himself. Than this proceeding, it would have been difficult to have found



one more injurious to the moral discipline of the army; and, as the result proved, it was injurious to the fame of the general-in-chief.

In the mean time, Lieutenant-colonel Duncan, from whose letter the obnoxious article republished in the Tampico newspaper had been in great part compiled by a friend in the United States, and published by that friend without his knowledge, avowed himself the author of the Tampico letter, and declared that it had been written without the knowledge, consent, or approbation of General Worth or of any other person. The ground of proceeding against Worth on account of the letter was thus swept away; but Duncan was immediately arrested.

General Pillow had other matters in dispute with which he was engaged at the time. On account of aspersions put forth against him, in the presence of several officers, by the general-in-chief, in his absence, concerning the removal of two small howitzers from the Castle of Chapultepec, which it was intimated he intended to appropriate to himself, he had demanded a court of inquiry. The finding of the court contained an error of fact, and certain conclusions were based upon it which General Scott approved. General Pillow requested that the case should be referred back to the court for its consideration. The general-in-chief refused to grant the request, and from the refusal General Pillow appealed to the War Department. The matter contained in his appeal, and the reasons

which were therein suggested as those which probably influenced General Scott's action, as well as the expressed determination to send a copy of the appeal direct to the War Department, were made the ground of his arrest, which took place on the 21st of November.

Having been refused any explanation or redress for the insults contained in General Orders No. 349, General Worth likewise appealed to the War Department, and in his appeal stated the substance of heavy charges which he intended to prefer against General Scott. They were complimentary to the commander-in-chief neither as regarded his honor as a gentleman nor his conduct as an officer; but, certainly, were no more insulting than the published calumny of which Worth was one of the objects. The disrespect which was manifested was, however, made the ground of his arrest, and before the 1st of December it was effected.

In observing these occurrences and the order of the various events, certain remarkable coincidences, which throw some light upon the causes of them, must not be overlooked. The first letter, arriving in October, had occasioned no immediate action. At that time no intimation of Mr. Trist's recall had been received in Mexico. Before the issue of General Orders No. 349, rumors to the effect that his mission was to be ended had reached the army. In the disapprobation of the commissioner's conduct which the recall demonstrated may be found

a reason for commencing proceedings against Worth and Pillow; for, of all the general officers then in Mexico, they two were those only who had openly opposed the agreement to the Tacubaya armistice without a guarantee of the enemy's good faith. As their opposition to that fatal measure was likely to be no less creditable to them than the glory of their military achievements, it became a matter of policy with those who had advised and counseled the convention to crush them. Whether Trist's advice was given to General Scott to induce him to issue General Orders No. 349, or whether Scott, desirous of shielding himself by the arrogation of all military honors, and crushing those who had opposed his delusion in the important matter of the armistice, took the step without advice, are questions of not much importance to the argument. The facts that one of the obnoxious letters was in Mexico before the recall of Mr. Trist was rumored, and that with the rumor of the recall came the Tampico letter, and that the denunciatory order came forth from head-quarters immediately after, speak for themselves.

Before Pillow's arrest the actual letter of recall had been received, and to show whether Mr. Trist, who was living under the same roof and in the closest intimacy with General Scott, ardently desired the arrest, if, indeed, it were not made at his immediate instance, it is only necessary to read his animadversions against General Pillow, and his confident expression concerning the ruin of his



character. These were put forth in his letter of December 6th to the Secretary of State, and in connection with an expression of the belief that his own recall was owing to Pillow's private representations to the President. After speaking of the state of things existing in Mexico at the date of his letter, he wrote, "Of all this the President knew nothing, and the supposition by which he allowed himself to be governed (under the influence, doubtless, of private representations from an intriguer, who, to the deep disgrace of our country, as she will ere long deeply feel, on beholding the picture, faint though it will be, of the unimaginable and incomprehensible baseness of his character, pollutes this glorious army by his presence) made the state of things in this country '*entirely the reverse of that which actually exists*,' and which already existed when his determination was formed."\* The superlative hatred displayed in this rare "specimen of diplomatic literature and manners," when it is remembered that its author was at the time of its composition a fellow-lodger with General Scott, requires no argument to show his gratification at the arrest of the officer to whom he attributed the cause of his recall.

How far he was right in his supposition that it did originate with the individual who received the odium of it at the hands of Mr. Trist it is not the purpose to inquire. It is, however, certain that

\* Executive Document, No. 65, Senate, first Session of the thirtieth Congress, p. 245.

General Pillow was the personal friend of the President, and had he used any influence to effect the recall of the commissioner, there would have been wanting no better evidence to show that he acted with reason, and for the dignity and interest of his country, than is to be found in the letter from which the above extract is quoted. Certainly no man who so palpably disobeys the direct instructions of his government, and whose spirit is capable of entertaining such vindictive and violent feelings, and who, withal, is accustomed to give them so free a vent in his official correspondence, can be a fit repository for so delicate a trust as that of negotiating a treaty of peace with a foreign nation. When the various schemes and intrigues in which Mr. Trist was a participant, and which his presence brought about, all ending in the disastrous convention of Tacubaya, are remembered, it may well be considered cause of regret that, if Pillow's representations of his total unfitness for his station did actually cause his recall, they were not made to the President at an earlier day. The loss of the army in the operations subsequent to the armistice would have been avoided, and when negotiations for peace were carried on, they might have been in a manner more consonant with the honor and dignity of the United States.

By the arrests which had occurred, in the manner and for the reasons which have been recounted, the army was deprived of the services of two general officers. Two more were to leave in the

downward train which General Scott had intended to send about the 1st of December. At his own request, Twiggs was detached from the command of his fine division to take the post of Governor of Vera Cruz. Pierce was about to leave the country, with the intention of resigning. If they left immediately, and before the arrival of re-enforcements, there would have remained present in Mexico but two general officers for duty besides the general-in-chief. One of these, Smith, was the governor of the city, and Cadwalader alone was available for any detached operation. The command of the troops had devolved upon officers of inferior grades; and although none doubted their capacity, yet the scarcity of officers of rank, even as high as field officers, fit for duty, which had long been an evil in the American army, rendered the loss of the services of such as were, in their proper positions, still more seriously felt. This state of the army may well have been a reason for the delay of the expedition, as well as the small number of troops which were present at the capital. On the 7th of December, however, re-enforcements began to arrive, and on the following days different columns of Generals Patterson's and Cushing's commands, and the troops of Lally's column, came in. The proposed convoy was then sent to the sea-board.

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General Lane's command had been halted at



Puebla, in obedience to the circular letter of the general-in-chief of October the 13th, and the establishment of posts, as directed in paragraphs of that letter, had been in great measure accomplished. This had, in part, occasioned the delay of the arrival of re-enforcements, although General Patterson had commenced the establishment of the posts, under orders from the Secretary of War, before he received the circular.

The remaining corps from General Taylor's line of operations had arrived at Vera Cruz soon after Lane's departure thence, and they were soon joined by several regiments of volunteers for the war, lately organized in the United States. By the middle of October over 3500 troops were encamped at Vergara, awaiting the organization of transportation to march into the interior. In the meanwhile, several expeditions of Texan rangers were sent out, which had some effect in breaking up the haunts of the guerilla bands in the neighborhood. Garrisons were established at the Puente Nacional and the Rio San Juan. A regiment of volunteers had been sent forward to the former place some weeks previously, and had broken up the guerillas in that quarter in a few active operations. On the 17th of October the thirteenth regiment of infantry marched to that place with a convoy of wagons. It was to form the permanent garrison.

On the 1st of November Patterson marched with about 3000 men from Vera Cruz. On the 4th he arrived at the Puente Nacional. While there, he

received a proposition from Padre Jarauta, a guerillero who had been infesting the neighborhood for some previous time. The padre had quarreled with Zenobio, and their parties had even come to blows, before he had taken that theater of operations. Being annoyed and distressed by the movements of the garrison of Puente Nacional, he offered to give up the occupation of a guerillero, and to return to his clerical profession, upon a guarantee of his personal safety. Patterson would give him no explicit guarantee, and the envoy from the guerilla priest returned with so unsatisfactory an answer that Jarauta gave up the idea of quitting the service upon which he was engaged. But he at once changed his locality, for his party was composed of such atrocious robbers that the Mexican authorities even would not submit to its presence.

Leaving the thirteenth regiment at the Puente Nacional, Patterson continued his march on the 5th, taking with him the Maryland and District of Columbia regiment of volunteers, which had formed the first garrison. On the 8th he arrived at Jalapa with 2600 men fit for duty. A halt was made at that point, and the train of the command was sent back under an escort to Vera Cruz, to bring forward the necessary supplies for the post which was to be established.

In the mean while, re-enforcements of volunteer regiments, and of recruits for the regulars, had continued to arrive at Vera Cruz, and by the latter part of November, when Patterson's train returned

to Jalapa, two columns, one of near 4000 volunteers, under General Butler, and one some 1300 strong, under Lieutenant-colonel Johnstone (made up of the escort of the first train from Mexico and detachments of recruits), were nearly ready for the route.

Having located the garrison at Jalapa, Patterson marched thence, and taking with him a portion of Lane's command from Puebla, continued on and arrived at Mexico. A regiment of Ohio volunteers was established at Rio Frio, and the line of communication between the city of Mexico and Vera Cruz, being garrisoned at Rio Frio, Puebla, Perote, Jalapa, the Puente Nacional, and the Rio San Juan, was secure for the passage of any respectable escort.

General Butler's and Lieutenant-colonel Johnstone's commands arrived in Mexico on the 17th, 18th, and 19th of December, making the total force present in the valley of Mexico near 15,000 soldiers of all arms.

During the advance of these columns of troops General Lane had conducted an expedition from Puebla against the enemy. Having learned that he was in some force at Matamoras, a town distant fifty-four miles from Puebla, where there was a considerable depôt of munitions of war and other public property, he marched with one hundred and sixty mounted men and a piece of artillery at seven o'clock on the evening of the 22d of November. At seven o'clock on the morning of the 23d the



command arrived at Matamoras. The advanced guard of the enemy was encountered as the town was approached, and quickly driven in upon the main body. The whole Mexican force fled, and the Americans entered the town, having inflicted a considerable loss upon the retreating enemy without sustaining any. Three pieces of artillery, a large quantity of ammunition, several hundred muskets, sabers, and escopetas, one hundred horses, and a quantity of medical stores, were captured. Twenty-one American prisoners were released, and, being mounted on the captured horses, were added to the force. Such of the captured property as could not be removed was destroyed, and on the morning of the 24th the command commenced its return march toward Puebla.

While moving through the mountain pass of Galaxara, the enemy made his appearance in considerable force in front. He was quickly driven, after a scrambling skirmish, in which one officer, Lieutenant Ridgely, of the fourth infantry, was killed, and several other Americans wounded. No other direct opposition was encountered, although the enemy hovered on the flanks, outside of cannon range, during the day, and on the evening of the 25th the detachment reached Puebla.\*

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In preparation for enforcing the new system of

\* Official Report. Executive Document, No. 1, Senate, second Session of the thirtieth Congress, p. 86.

policy which he had been ordered to adopt, on the 15th of December General Scott issued General Orders No. 376, in which he announced the intention of occupying the republic of Mexico until the latter should sue for peace. The payment of revenue to Mexican authorities was forbidden, and various monopolies, which had hitherto been for the benefit of the state, were abolished.\* The details of taxes which it was intended to impose were not published, but the general features of the taxes were announced.

On the 17th of December, in a letter to the Secretary of War, it was stated that a military movement would take place soon after the arrival of General Butler's and Lieutenant-colonel Johnstone's commands, which were just then within close vicinity. It was said, after announcing their arrival, "And in a week I propose to dispatch one column to San Luis de Potosi. When, or whether I shall have a sufficient independent force for Zacatecas, is yet to me quite uncertain. The San Luis column, with a view to Tampico and in part to Zacatecas, is the more important, and may be enlarged to perhaps 7000 men."†

The re-enforcements arrived, but no movements were ordered or undertaken. By this time Mr. Trist had become deeply engaged in his unauthorized negotiations, with the assistance of Mr. McIntosh, the British consul, and others connected

\* Executive Document, No. 60, House of Representatives, first Session of the thirtieth Congress, p. 1050.

† Idem, p. 1047.

with the British embassy. It may be well to remember that the consul was directly interested to a large amount in the value of the Mexican bonds, and in the mints of the city of Mexico, which he had leased for a term of years from Santa Anna, when the latter had needed funds for preparing his defenses against the American army. The part which this individual had borne in the Puebla correspondence, and in the arrangement by which General Scott had been induced to agree to the armistice, was well known; yet he continued to be on intimate and friendly terms with the American general-in-chief and commissioner. His mercantile house was the house of deposit for the funds of the general, and he was consulted in the matter of the taxes to be imposed, and other revenues to be collected. Indeed, a memoir on the subject of the precious metals,\* which General Scott sent home to Washington, has too much in favor of the protection of the mints, and other branches of the business in which Mr. M'Intosh had a direct interest, to allow much room for a doubt upon the subject, even if the fact of his intimacy at general headquarters did not favor the idea that he had a participation in drafting it.

The recommencement of negotiations by an unauthorized person may have been a reason for the delay of the proposed expeditions. If there were any prospect of their success, and the general-in-

\* Executive Document, No. 60, House of Representatives, first Session of the thirtieth Congress, p. 1051.



chief had chosen to take the responsibility, and given the authority, it was a cause for it. The reasons assigned in a letter to the Secretary of War of December the 25th, had they been put forth in another manner, would have been good reasons to have spread before the Mexican authorities. It was said that the expedition was unable to proceed on account of the want of supplies. If this were the case, and it was understood by the enemy, his functionaries would have been admonished to take advantage of a season of necessary inactivity, and to hasten their proceedings in favor of peace, if, indeed, they were in reality to be entered upon.

It is certain that no intimation of Mr. Trist's employment at the time was given to the Secretary of War; and although the belief was expressed in the latter part of the letter that in the course of the next month propositions for peace would be submitted by the incoming Mexican government, yet the success of any treaty which it might agree upon the general-in-chief held to be improbable.\* Nothing in reference to the treaty or prospect of negotiations was stated as an excuse for the delay of military operations. The reasons for that delay took the usual form of complaints against the departments at home, and of a statement of difficulties and annoyances.

For a long period the army had received no sup-

\* Executive Document, No. 60, House of Representatives, first Session of the thirtieth Congress, p. 1049.

ply of clothing from the United States. It had been supplied at Puebla with articles manufactured in the country, but they had given little satisfaction, and were of exceedingly perishable material. The first train from the city of Mexico to Vera Cruz had for its principal object the supply of the army in that particular. When it arrived at Vera Cruz, the depôt of clothing had been diminished by the issue to the volunteers of the different commands which had passed through, although that kind of force was not entitled to the allowance by law. The train brought up no supply; and that the depôt had not been able to fill the requisitions, and that the volunteers should have come from the United States and from Brazos Santiago without stores of clothing, were made the subjects of bitter complaint.\* They were, indeed, matters about which complaint might very well have been made, and the inconveniences and annoyances which must always necessarily result from such wants can only be properly appreciated by military men. The fault lay in the system of the government, and in the law for the organization of the volunteer force, as much, if not more, than in the proceedings of the quarter-master general or other departments of the staff. But whether the want of the clothing was a sufficient reason for delaying an expedition of troops which were supplied at the time, and when it was necessary to depend on the supply contain-

\* Executive Document, No. 60, House of Representatives, first Session of the thirtieth Congress, p. 1047.

ed in the country, for some months at least, until the matter could be rectified by action at Washington, may be doubted, if, indeed, the expedition were of any importance, and it had not been thought expedient to delay movement in order to watch the chances of negotiation.

Among other complaints of the general-in-chief, and that which apparently cost him the greatest distress, was the bad moral condition of the army. This was set forth in his letter of December the 25th in the following language :

“ With excessive labor I had brought the old regiments—volunteers as well as regulars—favored by our long but necessary halts at Vera Cruz, Jalapa, and Puebla, to respectable degrees of discipline, instruction, and economy. The same intolerable work at general head-quarters is to be perpetually renewed, or all the credit of this army for moral conduct, as well as gallantry and prowess in the field, will be utterly lost by new arrivals, and there is no hope of bringing up to the proper standard distant posts and detachments. These can not be governed by any written code of orders or instructions sent from a distance. I do not mean to accuse the re-enforcements generally of deficiency in valor, patriotism, or moral character. Far from it ; but among all new levies, of whatever denomination, there are always a few miscreants in every hundred, enough, without *discipline*, to disgrace the entire mass, and, what is infinitely worse, the *country* which employs them.



My daily distresses under this head weigh me to the earth."\*

This remarkable paragraph, which sets forth so truly and in such strong language the absolute necessity of good moral discipline in an army for the security of its own and its country's honor, contains, at the same time, an assumption of the credit of disciplining the old troops, a complaint of the intolerable nature of the service, and, it may have been, an excuse for delay in military operations for the purpose of instruction. Each of these may well be the subject of remark.

The moral conduct of the army, in the operations which led to the capture of the city of Mexico, was indeed admirable; but how far it was owing to any exertions directed from head-quarters, except that for the establishment of military commissions for the punishment of offenders, may well be questioned. Little instruction had been given to the troops at Vera Cruz, a great portion of the army was detached while head-quarters were at Jalapa, and although, during the stay at Puebla, such corps as were present were well and strictly drilled, yet the ordinary rules of garrison service required no less; and if the orders for such instruction had not issued from head-quarters, the general-in-chief would have failed in the most obvious part of his duty. He took no personal part in the instruction except attendance upon a few reviews,

\* Executive Document, No. 60, House of Representatives, first Session of the 30th Congress, p. 1048.

nor did his staff. As for that kind of work being intolerable, if it were, it was high time for an officer who found it so to throw up his commission. However, over 3000 of the troops which marched from Puebla were recruits and new levies, which had been present at that point but a few days, and had had no opportunity of profiting by the intolerable labors, in favor of military morality, at headquarters. The good conduct of that portion of the army, then, could form no part of the boast.

As for the means which had been made use of to keep up a state of good moral discipline, which is and was considered so necessary, a few glances at the state of things in the city of Mexico may not be out of place.

There is nothing more demoralizing to a large body of men than the idle occupation of a large and luxurious capital, and the most stringent regulations, both for the inhabitants and the soldiery, are generally required for the prevention of outrages. As it was in Mexico, the outrages and robberies which were committed were, for a long time subsequent to the occupation, trifling and unimportant, and, in comparison with those common among the Mexicans themselves, they sunk into utter insignificance; but with the period of inactivity, these outrages increased in frequency. A fruitful cause of them may be found in the vices openly permitted by the governor and the general-in-chief.

Whenever allowed, there invariably follows in

the train of an army an indefinite number of all sorts of vagabonds, and this class was by no means a small one in the train of the American army. Gamblers of all complexions, from the genteel black-leg down to the thimble-rigger, were there; and a company, composed in great part of them, had even been organized for service in the course of operations in the valley. They were (like one of native spies, made up of the scourings of the jails of Puebla, and commanded by a native robber and outlaw) independent, and received their instructions from the inspector general of the army. But little is known of their military services; but, shortly after the occupation of the capital, they commenced operations at their legitimate business; indeed, this had been carried on at every city where a halt had been made of sufficient length to permit the practice of any measures of moral discipline. Before the entrance into Mexico, gambling had not been allowed by the American military authorities; nay, in many cases it had been positively prohibited; but, in spite of the prohibition, it had flourished, and did flourish for some time after the occupation of Mexico. No very stringent measures were taken with the bankers who followed the business, and in the month of November the door was thrown open. Licenses were granted by General Smith at the rate of one thousand dollars per month for one set of tables. The speed with which this tax was paid, as well as the number of licenses granted from time to time, told



plainly to what an extent the vice was indulged in. Officers and soldiers, in great numbers, were attendants at the different hells, which varied in degree as much as the talents and capitals of their keepers.

A more effective instrument for the destruction of any thing like morality, either with the old army or with the re-enforcements, could hardly have been imagined. It had its effect, and did produce something like the state of things so much dreaded by the general-in-chief.

From this very cause, thus legally permitted and sanctioned, there happened an event some little time subsequently, which in truth did disgrace the army, and, what was infinitely worse, the *country* which employed it. I allude to an attempt at robbery, committed by an officer of the regular army, three of Pennsylvania volunteers, and an organized band of soldiers and employées of the quarter-master's department. The event is still so fresh in the memory of the army, and, it is feared, of others, that no further allusion to it can be required.

The discipline of the army was but little promoted by the issue of such orders as No. 349, in which the lieutenants of the general-in-chief were openly held up to the "contempt and indignation" of "all honorable officers" who loved "their country, their profession, and the truth of history," upon suspicions which had at the time assumed no legal shape, and which proved to be, as they were, ridiculously false. How could it have been ex-

pected that two generals of division, whose lead the greater portion of the army had followed to victory, could enforce that salutary discipline considered so necessary, if the same contempt and disrespect were manifested by their subordinates which were shown in published orders? And such manifestation was invoked by the very order. How could it be believed that the harmony of the public service in subordinate branches could be sustained, when discord existed in the higher departments?

To add to the disreputable state of things which existed, a venal and prostituted press, in connection with the head-quarters of the army, lent all the influence of which such a thing is possessed. The existence of such a nuisance may well be commented upon. From the time at which the American army had first entered the Mexican republic, the sweepings of the newspaper offices had followed it, with those of other occupations. The press of the United States is sufficiently licentious at home, but there it is kept in check by its own license, which pits one editor against another. There, moreover, the public opinion of a nation of freemen can and does control the general character of the instrument, which its workers constantly, and with such questionable modesty, proclaim, when most licentious, to be the palladium of liberty. At different posts in Mexico, persons but little qualified for the business, except in the manual execution of it, set up offices, and issued forth

sheets as full of nonsense as many which give their proprietors an excuse for idleness at home. They were useful in so far as they were vehicles for the publication of orders; but the little use of which they were in that way was more than compensated by their mendacity (more effectual than that of others, inasmuch as it was supposed that they spoke *ex cathedra*), and the publication of different movements, as well as their discussions of different measures of policy. They were under surveillance, it is true, but the very fact of the existence of such things as they were comported but little with the dignity of the army. Many editors in the United States sounded the praise of these newspaper abortions, and announced them as pioneers in the march of intellect and enlightenment in Mexico. Even statesmen publicly expressed a coincident belief. Nevertheless, they were regarded by many officers, if not, indeed, the large majority, not only as useless, but as a positive disgrace.

One of these establishments followed the headquarters of General Scott, and was his official organ for the publication of orders, and for all kinds of job-work in the way of printing blanks, &c., by which a liberal patronage was allowed to the drunken character at its head. This person, of course, sided with his patron in his official quarrels, and, so soon as they became known, he did not fail to attack those with whom he had differences by hints, sarcastic pieces, and innuendoes, as well as open condemnation. And all this was un-



der the immediate eye of the general-in-chief, and with the knowledge, if not at the instigation, of the acting inspecting general of the army.

That the daily distresses of the general-in-chief on account of the state of moral discipline existing among his troops should have weighed him to the earth was most certainly to be regretted, for the public service must necessarily have suffered by the complete prostration of the head of the army. But, fortunately, notwithstanding the existence of very many causes and elements of immorality, the state of things at the date of the letter was not quite so bad as might reasonably have been anticipated. Not many murders or robberies had been committed by Americans, and certainly not near so many as would have been justifiable, had the right of retaliation been exercised upon the Mexican ladrones and leperos.

To have put a stop to the increasing evil, it would appear that active operations would have been the immediate and effectual remedy. Idleness would have ceased, and with it its accompanying effect. The allurements and vices of the capital would have been escaped; and another consideration of no small importance was, that the sick list, that unfailing attendant upon close quarters in Mexican convents, would have been sensibly diminished.

It may have been intended that the depression of the commander-in-chief, of which the causes were indirectly laid at the door of the authorities

at home, should appear as the effect of persecutions. A little reflection, however, might have sufficed to show, that when an officer who disobeys the orders of his government, keeps his army in idleness in a large city, gives his consent to the public license of vice, quarrels with his generals upon unfounded suspicions, appeals for support against them to the mass of his army in general orders, and permits the existence of a venal press, which is engaged in puffing one class to the malignant exclusion of others; that when he attempts to pull down the edifice of his wrongs and difficulties to crush the authorities of his government by the disclosure of their persecutions, some portion of the material must fall upon himself, and that, like the blind chieftain of Israel, he too must lie broken amid the ruins.

In the mean while General Scott had completed his study of the revenues of Mexico, and had nearly finished an order fixing the amount of the direct taxes and the duties to be collected upon the precious metals, and prescribing the methods of collecting them. This order (No. 395\*) was promulgated on the 31st of December, and the first partial step for its execution was taken about the same time, by sending the ninth regiment of infantry, under Colonel Withers, to the town of Pachuca, in the neighborhood of the mines of Real del Monte, some sixty miles northeast of Mexico. At that

\* Executive Document, No. 60, House of Representatives, first Session of the thirtieth Congress, p. 1063.

point there was an assay office, to which it was known that a large amount of bullion would soon be sent; and as the Mexican authorities would seize the duties if it were not occupied, the detachment was made to collect them.

The three divisions of regulars were reorganized into three brigades, as there were no major generals to command them; both Worth and Pillow being in arrest, and Twiggs, who, though but a brigadier, had long been in command of a division, having left for Vera Cruz. In the reorganization, no division was left entire. Indeed, had the effect of entirely breaking up the *esprit du corps* which existed in the organization under which victory had been won been aimed at, it could not have been ordered other than it was. Portions of the first, second, and third divisions were found in each of the three brigades, which were commanded by Smith, Cadwalader, and Colonel Riley.

Soon after the issue of General Order No. 395, another partial measure of occupation was effected by the location of the greater part of Cadwalader's brigade at Toluca, within forty miles of the capital, for the purpose of collecting the direct taxes imposed upon the State of Mexico from that vicinity. But the mass of the army remained in inactivity, except some parties of cavalry, which were employed from time to time in service against the guerillas.

A detachment was in a few weeks sent to Cuernavaca for the purpose of collecting revenue.



All of those located at Pachuca, Toluca, and Cuernavaca, made up but little more force than one of the divisions of the army under the former organization. Smith's and Riley's heavy brigades, and Butler's and Patterson's large divisions of volunteers, remained in garrison. The number of troops was too great to be conveniently accommodated in the city of Mexico, and therefore Riley's brigade was located at Tacubaya, Patterson's division at San Angel, and a portion of Butler's was encamped at Molino del Rey. The other portion, and Smith's brigade, were quartered in the city.

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Columns of troops continued to traverse the route between Mexico and Vera Cruz, consisting both of re-enforcements and the smaller escorts to the downward trains. No important interruption was experienced by any of those proceeding to the sea-board, but Zenobio's guerilleros were lying in wait along the route for the purpose of plundering any loosely-conducted train of merchandise. The traders of the different cities on the route had begun to take advantage of the American tariff of duties, and, as negotiations had commenced, they made all haste to bring forward into the interior as heavy quantities of merchandise as possible, before the return of peace should bring about the old oppressive system. Each column of American troops which marched from Vera Cruz was accompanied by large trains of pack-mules laden with

goods, of which the owners endeavored to avail themselves of the protection of the escorts. In many cases, the accumulation of public and private property in the trains was greatly disproportionate to the size of the escort.

Zenobio took advantage of these circumstances, and on one occasion, on the 4th of January, 1848, he cut up a small detachment of mounted rifles, constituting a rear guard, and ran off with 250 pack-mules laden with merchandise from the rear of a train as it passed the village of Santa Fé. He was satisfied with this success, however, and made no further attempt to molest the escort or to interrupt its advance. Lieutenant-colonel Miles, who commanded it, had information that he was to be attacked at or near Cerro Gordo, and sent information to that effect to General Marshall, who was then at Jalapa with an upward column, having been detained at that point by the sickness of his troops. In compliance with Miles's suggestion, Marshall sent a force to Cerro Gordo from Jalapa to co-operate with the advancing column, and this disposition prevented the attack, if, indeed, Zenobio seriously contemplated it.

The various annoyances of the guerillas caused a column of newly-arrived troops to be sent during the month of January to occupy the towns of Cordova and Orizaba, on a more southerly route from Vera Cruz to Mexico, for about those towns Zenobio and other guerilla chiefs had held their headquarters for some previous months. The occupa-

tion was for the purpose of breaking them up, and to effect the collection of the imposed contributions. Colonel Bankhead commanded the troops sent from Vera Cruz for the purpose, but while he was on his march, Orizaba was occupied by other forces which had come down from Mexico.

On the 18th of January General Lane marched from that city with a mounted force of about 350 men, made up of detachments of the third dragoons, mounted rifles, and Texan rangers, for the duty of scouring the country and driving the guerrilleros from the roads. Having received information of Santa Anna's position at Tehuacan, Lane resolved to attempt his capture. After passing Puebla, he turned off the main road to the south, and, after marching all night, occupied two large haciendas, situated in a lone region of country, where the men and horses of the command were concealed during the day. The Mexican residents of the hacienda were held close prisoners until dark. On the evening of the 22d, the command marched in the direction of Tehuacan, and, proceeding about five miles, met a carriage with an escort of ten or twelve armed men. The escort was at once disarmed, but the occupant of the carriage produced a written safeguard over the signature of General Smith, and upon this the whole party was allowed to proceed. Lane continued on over a difficult and rocky path for over forty miles, and just at break of day arrived at Tehuacan. Major Polk's command of dragoons and rifles im-



mediately surrounded the town, and the Texan rangers, under Colonel Hays, entered it at once. But the bird had flown. Santa Anna had been warned of the approach of the party by one of the escort which had been encountered during the early part of the night, who had been sent back for the purpose by the occupant of the carriage. He had barely time to make his escape with his family and an escort, leaving all his personal effects and baggage. These, with the exception of the wardrobe of his wife, were quickly plundered by the troops of the command.

Lane remained at Tehuacan until the 24th, and on that day marched for Orizaba. He entered it on the 25th without opposition. A guerilla which had been in the town evacuated it on his approach. A quantity of government property was seized and sold for the benefit of the United States.

On the 26th a letter of submission was received from the Ayuntamiento of Cordova, and on the 28th the general started for that place with a detachment. The town was entered and taken possession of. Six American prisoners were released.

Hearing that Colonel Bankhead's march from Vera Cruz had been delayed, on the 31st Cordova was evacuated, and being joined by the temporary garrison of Orizaba en route, the whole command returned to Puebla. From that city the march was directed through Tlascala by a northern route to the city of Mexico. Passing through the town of San Juan de Teotihuican, a guerilla, under the

Mexican Colonel Manuel Falcon, was encountered and dispersed, with the loss of 17 slain. A quantity of muskets and lances, besides stores of military clothing, were captured and destroyed. Lane's command entered the city of Mexico on the evening of the 6th of February.\*

Colonel Bankhead had been delayed by the difficulties of the route from Vera Cruz to Orizaba, but they were finally overcome, and soon after he took quiet possession of both that place and Cordova.

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During the month of January, the collection of portions of the military contributions which had been imposed upon the State of Mexico was slowly effected. Those imposed upon the states upon the eastern part of the line were also gathered in.

By the 2d of February Mr. Trist's unauthorized negotiations had resulted in the treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, of which the terms will be hereafter noticed. So soon as this treaty was concluded, General Scott at once abandoned any intention which he might have had of moving forward in force until after the reception of the action of the home government.† This, indeed, was natural and politic, and could have been considered in no degree strange, had he not previously announced, from time to time, that he was about to advance

\* Official Report. Executive Document, No. 1, Senate, second Session of the thirtieth Congress, p. 89.

† Executive Document, No. 60, House of Representatives, first Session of the thirtieth Congress, p. 1082.

in the execution of his orders, while, at the same time, he knew perfectly well that the unauthorized negotiations were progressing. The course of action which he adopted was not in keeping with that integrity of command which he insisted upon so strongly in his communications with the War Department and the American commissioner during the spring and summer of 1847. The facts that he allowed a person entirely unauthorized, nay, positively forbidden, to carry on negotiations with the Mexican authorities; that, on partial reasons, he refrained from any but very partial operations in pursuance of the action which had been prescribed for him, even after he had repeatedly announced his intention of obeying his orders; and that, upon the conclusion of the treaty, he indirectly expressed his determination to await the decision of his government, would induce the belief that he was willing that the positive orders of the President should be disobeyed in an important matter, that he countenanced the disobedience, and, meanwhile, was unwilling to assume the responsibility of the measure, although he was undoubtedly the chief representative of his country then present in Mexico. It may well be considered that it was his duty to have prevented any such proceedings, unless undertaken with his consent, given with the knowledge or conviction of their expediency. Certainly he would have allowed no officer of the army or citizen follower of it to have carried on such a negotiation. Why, then, the



ex-commissioner, who had no more power than either?

Had General Scott taken the responsibility in the outset, and withheld the information of Mr. Trist's recall from the Mexican government; had he openly announced the commencement of negotiations with his sanction, and his conviction of their expediency and speedy success, to the Secretary of War, and meanwhile done all in his power, and all which he did do, and prepared his columns for immediate movement upon an unfavorable issue, or for striking at once upon any Mexican force about Queretaro which might demonstrate an opposition to his future advance, he would have been acting the part more suited to the position of a great commander. Whatever might have been said of his judgment, his actions would have been in good faith with the American as well as the Mexican government. His disobedience would have been open, and for reasons; and if (as did actually occur) the treaty proved successful, he would have had the glory of it. His conduct must have met the decided approbation of his government, and certainly would of his countrymen, for nothing is more natural than for the popular voice to shout the praises of successful disobedience.

The state of things was very different from that which existed when the experiment of the armistice of Tacubaya was made under his orders and sanction. Then, he relinquished every military advantage; here, he would have given up none of

which he was in possession, and he would have been in position to break up any threatening opposition. Then, the Mexican army, in strong positions, numbered over 25,000 men ; at this time, the enemy had nowhere more than 5000 troops embodied. Then, in a word, the Mexican army possessed all the physical elements of strength, while the American army was in a dangerous situation. If he could then have taken such a responsibility, at the imminent hazard of the total destruction of the army, he certainly could have taken that of this negotiation, if it were expedient and necessary. In that case, affairs would have, at least, been conducted in a frank and open method, and the appearance of a trick for cheating his government into a peace would have been avoided. The trick was indeed useless, for peace was the end and object of the war ; and had it been obtained in a direct and honest manner, if it were accepted, the government must have supported him, as well as the commissioner, so far as related to the negotiations. As it was, neither got any glory, for the general-in-chief had only a passive share in them by allowing them to proceed, while he avowed his intention of prosecuting hostilities. The intriguing policy of the commissioner, and his rare correspondence, insulting as it was to his government, caused him to experience a severe rebuke at the hands of government and people, notwithstanding his successful treaty.

That General Scott did not countenance Mr.

Trist's conduct, and had no share in it, is a useless remark for those who would separate the action of the two. They lived together, without other messmates, and to suppose for an instant that during all that time they were ignorant of each other's plans, when every arrangement and every event showed plainly that those of the one were laid to suit those of the other, is too absurd an idea to be entertained.

Soon after the conclusion of the treaty, rumors reached Mexico that General Scott was to be superseded in the command of the army by the orders of the government. The orders were actually received on the 18th of February, and, turning over the command to General Butler, on that day he finished his official action as commander-in-chief in the Mexican war.

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## CHAPTER XVIII.

Expiration of General Añaya's Term of Service as President of Mexico—Reaccession of Peña y Peña—Failure of Mexican Deputies to assemble—Causes—Schemes of General Paredes—Pronunciamiento at San Luis de Potosi—of Don Juan Alvarez—Action of Santa Anna—Of Peña y Peña's Government—Conclusion of the Treaty—Receipt of the News in Mexico—Armistice.

THE presidency of General Añaya expired by its limitation on the 8th of January, 1848, and Peña y Peña again assumed the direction of Mexican affairs in virtue of his office as President of the Su-



preme Court of Justice. The avowed peaceful policy under which both his former brief administration and that of Añaya had been able to continue in power was persisted in. The cabinet of the returned president was composed of the same persons who had held place for the last few previous months in the different departments. Indeed, the composition was entirely the same as that which existed under Añaya, except that he and Peña y Peña had changed places, the latter being the president, while the former performed the duties of a secretary. Rosa held the portfolios of state and treasury, Riva Palacios of justice, and Añaya succeeded Mora y Villamil as Minister of War.

The commissioners appointed by Añaya continued in their offices, and in their negotiations, direct and indirect, with Mr. Trist, which had been delayed for a short time by the receipt of the letter of recall of the American commissioner. So soon as he was determined to continue the negotiations in spite of his instructions, they commenced their business.

It was confidently said, in the early part of January, that the government felt itself strong enough to carry the measure through, if peace were the end of the executive of the United States. The great difficulty was in collecting a sufficient number of deputies to form a quorum of Congress. Seventeen new members had been at Queretaro by the 25th of December, and their early attendance at the temporary capital was looked upon as

an evidence that the business of peace would be speedily accomplished. The favorable augury proved fallacious when the time for action arrived, for no quorum was present. The government of Añaya had put forth every effort to secure the attendance of the members, and in the address which Peña y Peña had issued immediately after assuming power, he had urgently called upon them to assemble. No physical obstacles were placed in their way by the American general, for at this time not only was he abstaining from any movement in advance, but any member of the Mexican Congress who desired passports through his lines could have them for the asking.

But, about this time, the state of things in various parts of Mexico, ever unsettled, became more so than usual, on account of the intrigues of the various military leaders. As their outcries were principally against the measures of peace, and the rabble crews by which they were re-echoed were in many cases of respectable numerical strength, in this state of affairs may be seen the reason for the non-attendance of the deputies. Pronunciamientos and counter pronunciamientos were rife all over the country during the months of January and February.

In several places the partisans of Paredes attempted to get up the cry of "*Viva nuestra regna, Doña Luisa Fernanda de Bourbon,*" which showed that the agitator was still at work at his old schemes; but no further success attended his ef-

forts than to induce the leperos to indulge in a few shouts in some of the larger towns.

Padre Jarauta, who had come up from the *tierra caliente* to the vicinity of Mexico, was endeavoring to instigate the people to carry on the war; but he was so great a nuisance in any vicinity where he located himself, that the inhabitants were glad to be rid of him on any terms.

Don Juan Alvarez, having no particular employment for his Pintos, and not caring to attack the American troops, took post in the State of Mexico, near Sultepec. To that place the state authorities had retired upon Cadwalader's approach to Toluca. There Alvarez pronounced against any consideration of peace, and in favor of raising men and money for the support of the war. His first active step was for breaking up what remained of the government of the State of Mexico, by seizing the governor, Olaguibel. He deprived him of his liberty, and even threatened to put him to death. The threat was not executed. The Pinto chief-tain soon began to carry out his views in relation to raising money and men, but whether for the prosecution of the war or for furthering his own intrigues, he knows best himself. He seized the mines of Tlamascaltepec, and all the silver upon which he could lay his hands. He took possession of a quantity of arms belonging to the state, and recruited his force. His operations kept the peaceable inhabitants in the vicinity of his head-quarters in a perpetual state of alarm, but his only hos-



tile action against the Americans was to annoy Clarke's command at Cuernavaca by the seizure of provisions.

The movements of this partisan were doubtless at the instigation of Santa Anna, who, while undisturbed at Tehuacan, issued different manifestoes against the existing Mexican government and its policy, and in vindication of his own conduct. He had even claimed to be still the provisional president and commander-in-chief during Añaya's administration, and at its close his partisans strove zealously to bring about his return to power. As the negotiations which took place pending the armistice of Tacubaya had failed to bring about a peace, and as he had taken the alternative of acting with bad faith, he could now only take the position of opposition to any thing like peace on the terms proposed, and he complained that the incumbent executive was about to enter into a negotiation which he had refused because it was dishonorable to the nation. It was asserted that his efforts to avert the paramount disaster were the cause of his sacrifice.

Taking place at the time when it did, and being directed immediately against Olaguibel, a known enemy of the ex-president, the pronunciamiento could have had no other end than that of assisting another made by the governor and authorities of the State of San Luis de Potosi in favor of Santa Anna. As the latter was made by constituted authority, and was immediately directed against

the policy of the federal government, it was considered as most alarming, and at once received immediate attention at the hands of the government of Peña y Peña. Several of the states adjacent to San Luis joined in the movement, and the plan which was promulgated openly accused the government at Queretaro of failing to take measures for carrying on the war, and of treasonable correspondence with the general of the invading army.

Both Peña y Peña and Rosa answered the accusations contained in this so-called "rebellious document." Rosa's address contained the most detailed answer, as well as the most distinct avowal of policy. While it was not behind the document of the pronunciados in its assertion of the necessity of defending the national honor, yet it was such a one as would most effectually defend the course of the administration. The difficulties against which it contended were alluded to, and it was claimed, not without reason, that the existing government was that which had been formed when the nation was without a head, and all the elements of either strength or order were in utter confusion. The inability of the government to carry on the war was laid at the door of others, and one of the principal causes was said to be the action of Santa Anna in allowing the dispersion of the different corps of the army. In speaking of the state of that body, it was asked,

"What was the government to do with an army

whose officers and soldiers were almost naked, without arms, and discouraged by the results of the battles in the environs of the capital in which they took part? It was to clothe and feed them, to prevent their dispersion at whatever cost, to arm them, and to reorganize them into bodies fit for service. The government has discharged this duty to the extent of its means, clothing the soldiers, scantily it is true, and feeding them, though not so abundantly as desired."

The policy in reference to the negotiations for peace was boldly set forth, and in the expressions concerning it may be found the reasons why the Mexican government would not send commissioners to Washington, and for the action of Mr. Trist and General Scott. By that action in continuation of negotiation, the Mexican government was allowed its desired prestige, and Rosa seized upon it to answer the accusations of the pronunciados.

"The statement and insinuations," said he, "of the revolutionists, that an ignominious treaty of peace has been concluded, is a calumny. It is a calumny to assert that the national government has humbled itself to send propositions of peace to the cabinet at Washington, or that it has been offered, in order to terminate the war, advantages which the same cabinet did not exact. His Excellency the President authorizes me to give the lie to these calumnies, and to assure you that, in the midst of the misfortunes of the country, the national honor has not been tarnished, and will not be



under the present government, even should the condition of the republic become worse than it is."

"The government, then, has understood the national will in relation to the war. It believes the Republic is resolved upon sustaining the war at every peril, if the invader exacts conditions of peace ignominious to Mexico. But it is also resolved to make peace, if the end of putting a stop to the calamities of a bloody and disastrous contest, which has been so long continued—a contest of which the frightful evils have thus far fallen principally upon Mexico, but which, by an immutable principle of the eternal laws of justice which govern nations, must one day be felt in all their sad consequences by the United States of America—can be accomplished."

The avowal of policy thus skillfully put forth, with the assertion of the intention of defending the national honor, and the prophecy of ultimate injury to the United States, which might quiet apprehension on the one subject and flatter revengeful desires on the other, was undoubtedly that truly entertained by Peña y Peña's government at the time. At all events, the avowal had the best verification in the course of action pursued—a verification which is rarely found in the acts of Mexican authorities, and by no means universal in those of any nation.

The crisis had come, and the struggle of words in reference to the question of negotiation was to be gone through with. Of words I say, for neither

pronunciados nor government had many means of supporting a contest in arms, and neither could move what few they possessed any great distance from their own immediate localities. The comandante general of San Luis did not agree with the civil authorities of the state, and military action in that quarter was not to be expected. Don Juan Alvarez was too well satisfied with his locality about the mines of Tlascaltepec (which was excellent for his Pintos, from the nature of the country, and inaccessible to American troops, should they attempt to pursue him) to give up his supremacy there for a doubtful political point, which he cared nothing for personally, so long as he could plunder his friends with impunity. Enemies he could not plunder, and he did not attempt it, and he remained perfectly quiet in regard to any active operation against the government.

Peña y Peña had the greater regular force about Queretaro under Bustamente, but that vicinity was not so quiet that any portion of it could be spared for distant service against domestic enemies. Moreover, any such attempt would have given the strongest argument to the pronunciados in favor of the treachery of his administration, for it could have been said that it neglected the evident safety of the temporary capital for the purpose of turning the national arms against those whose only crime was a desire of maintaining the national honor at any hazards.

The answers of Peña y Peña and Rosa met the

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crisis promptly and skillfully, but the demonstrations of hostility were not so soon allayed that a quorum of deputies could, or rather would, be assembled at Queretaro. The excuses made by the absentees for their non-attendance were, in some cases, that they were sick, and in others, that they were unable to defray the expenses of the journey. But the real reason, with deputies so fearful of being compromised as the Mexican deputies and authorities generally proverbially are, is to be seen in the unsettled state of affairs, which was such that it was for a time difficult to form a definite idea of the result of the struggle. Those in favor of peace were timid, and those opposed to it feared to fill the quorum by their presence; and, that the measure might be consummated, various circulars were continually issued by the government urging attendance, but they were of little avail, although many deputies drew their traveling allowances from the different state authorities.

On the 21st of January there were only twenty-five members of the new Congress present, and although on the 24th there were nearly fifty, yet the number did not immediately increase, notwithstanding the different urgent calls which were made upon the absentees. At a meeting of present deputies, held early in February, it was ordered that the absentees should be denounced as traitors unless they were in their seats by the 20th of the month. None came, however, and affairs remained entirely in abeyance.



In the mean time, the revolutionary movement in San Luis ceased from want of sustenance, and although Alvarez and other pronunciados held out, yet they assumed a less hostile attitude toward the government of Peña y Peña. The treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo having been concluded, the administration boldly announced the fact in a circular to the governors of the states, over the signature of Rosa, dated February 6th. The necessity of submitting the question to the decision of Congress, and of enjoying the armistice (to be agreed upon) in the mean while, was strongly advocated. The terms of the treaty were not immediately made known, although the President promised that they should be so soon as the matter came before Congress, and that at that time he would give an exposition of the necessities which had induced him to agree to the negotiation. The tone of the document was such as to favor the belief that the government felt satisfied in its strength at the time, as the revolutionary movements had in a manner subsided.

However, the knowledge of the conclusion of the treaty had no effect in hastening the assembly of the tardy members. Parties and cabals opposed to the peace were at work in every town to delay, if, indeed, they could not defeat the ratification. Some of the terms of the treaty in some way became public, and formed fruitful subjects for discussion. The first account, and those which were probably allowed to divulge themselves by the

Mexican commissioners, in order to give a favorable impression, were, that Mexico was to receive some millions of dollars. But it soon became known that New Mexico and Upper California were ceded to the United States, and the cession was cause of sufficient opposition to keep the members of Congress at home.

The answers of the governors of the states to Rosa's circular were for the most part either strictly non-committal, or were in opposition to the negotiated treaty. Most of them contained complaints that the terms had not been fully and immediately made known, in order to give opportunity for popular discussions. But adverse and cautious as was the action of most authorities, no immediate pronunciamiento against the government was made, except by the Ayuntamiento of the city of San Luis, which declared that Peña y Peña and the members of his cabinet were traitors, and that the State of San Luis was no longer bound by the acts of the general government. The governor of the state, notwithstanding his late loudly-proclaimed hostility to the administration and the treaty, arrested the pronunciados, and dissolved the Ayuntamiento for its unauthorized action.

During the months of February and March an element of Mexican discord was eliminated by the departure of Santa Anna. After his quarters had been beaten up by the approach of Lane's party to Tehuacan, he applied to the government at Queretaro for passports to permit him to quit the coun-

try, which were granted without delay. He also applied to the American commander for a passport, which General Butler gave at once. With these the ex-president proceeded to the coast, and took his departure from Antigua with all convenient speed, having been escorted from Jalapa to that point by American troops. He had doubtless given up the hope of any success in his intrigues, or of being able to perpetuate his power in case they were successful. The active exertions of his partisans ceased so soon as he had left the country.

While Congress remained without a quorum at Queretaro, Generals Mora y Villamil and Quijano were commissioned on the part of the Mexican government to negotiate the terms of the armistice stipulated for in the treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo. These officers arrived in the city of Mexico on the 17th of February, the day preceding General Butler's succession to the command of the American army, and the action of the American commander in reference to the matter fell upon him. Although he could hardly recognize the validity of the treaty, or the propriety of Mr. Trist's negotiations, for he had received the orders of the United States government to send that individual out of the country, yet Butler did not deem it prudent to check the course of affairs, inasmuch as the faith of the United States was apparently pledged in the matter, and, moreover, it might prove that, unauthorized as the treaty was, it would be acceptable to the home government. He therefore appointed



Generals Worth and Smith as commissioners on the American side, and the negotiation of the terms of the armistice was commenced on the 29th of February.

The first demands of the Mexican commissioners were, as usual, arrogant in the extreme, and were to the effect that the American army should immediately retire from the country. They were at once negatived, as well as other demands of a similar nature. The convention which was finally agreed upon contained, so far as military operations were concerned, only the stipulation that neither party was to advance during its continuance. But various concessions in respect to the civil government of occupied towns were made on the part of the American general. The collection of the military contributions for the months of February and March was suspended, with a view to final relinquishment in the event of the ratification of the treaty. The stipulation contained in article 6th of the convention was remarkable, from its peculiarly Mexican character, as well as from the concession made by it. The fact of its being demanded showed the policy of the Mexican government, and, probably, that it had given up all hope of assembling a quorum of Congress without new electors, to which this article had reference. It read as follows :

“Article 6th. Whenever an election is to be held in any town or place occupied by the American troops, upon due notice thereof being given to the

commanding officer, he shall march the whole of his force out of the limits of such town or place, and there remain with them until after the hour at which such elections should be concluded, leaving within the town or place only the force necessary for the security of his barracks, hospitals, stores, and quarters."

"And no person belonging to the American army shall by any means, or on any consideration, attempt to obstruct or interfere with any elections, in order that they may be conducted according to the Mexican laws. In Vera Cruz, the troops shall retire within the walls of the fortifications, and there remain until the election is concluded."\*

The article quoted is in keeping with the whole document, which, like others of a similar nature, gave up many moral and physical advantages to the enemy. Unlike them, however, it was the consequence of a treaty actually agreed upon, and, so far as the Mexican government was concerned, by persons duly authorized to act. If the government had any stability, these concessions could be made with a show of safety. Nevertheless, it was a matter of no small risk on the part of the American general to agree to the convention; not on account of the relinquishment of military advantages, or of the opportunity afforded for the re-establishment of the enemy, for operations had already been so long delayed that all which Mexico could do was doubtless at the time accomplished.

\* "Army of Mexico," General Orders, No. 18, March 6th, 1848.

But, in the event of the failure of the treaty in the United States or in Mexico, the responsibility of the delay must have fallen upon those who, on the strength of a stipulation contained in a treaty made without authority, agreed to a convention so full of concessions to the enemy.

Agreed to as it was, the armistice went into effect, having been approved at Queretaro and Mexico, by the 5th of March. Elections were therefore appointed for deputies and for different state officers.

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During the progress of the events recounted in the few last chapters, various occurrences had taken place in California, New Mexico, and upon the western coast of Mexico. The isolated operations in these distant regions, perhaps, had little effect upon the main question of the war, inasmuch as possession of the territories treated of had been obtained at a previous period ; but they belong to the history of the war with Mexico. As the point has been nearly reached where it will be necessary to speak of the action of the American government on the treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo and the close of the war, these isolated operations will form the subject of the succeeding chapter.



## CHAPTER XIX.

Affairs in California and on western Coast of Mexico—Preparations for naval Operations—Seizure of Guyamas—Seizure of Mazatlan—Affair at Mulejé—Affairs at La Paz and San José—at Guyamas and San Blas—Second Attack on San José—Affair at San Antonio—at Todos Santos—*Affairs in New Mexico and Chihuahua*—General Price's Movement to Chihuahua—Occupation of the City—Affair at Santa Cruz de las Rosales.

No active opposition was offered by the inhabitants of Upper California to the government of Colonel Mason, and, saving the complaints and verbal demonstrations of hostility usual in all conquered countries, that department was at peace from the time of the capitulation of Cowenga. In Lower California, however, the case was different a short time after its occupation had been effected. A command, under Lieutenant-colonel Benton, of the New York regiment of California volunteers, had been stationed at the capital of the department, the town of La Paz, soon after General Kearney's departure for the United States, and the authority of the North American republic was proclaimed in the lower as well as the upper province. The force was too small to compel obedience at any great distance from the station, and although many Lower Californians professed to be satisfied with the change of flags, yet discontent prevailed, and the authority over the greater part of the country was but nominal. No actual attack, however, was made for some time, and the garrison of La Paz

was called upon for no other active service than that of observation.

Early in the month of October Commodore Shubrick made preparations for commencing naval operations against the different Mexican towns on the Pacific coast. His intention was to strike the first blow at Mazatlan, the most important commercial town on that coast, with a view of establishing there the tariff of duties to be collected as a part of the military contributions. At the time of sailing from Monterey, it was expected that Lieutenant-colonel Burton's command could be spared to take part in the proposed expedition, and that the Congress frigate and Portsmouth sloop of war, under Captain Lavallette, would be met off Cape St. Lucas.\* But, upon arriving at San José, Lower California, the commodore found such an existing state of things that it was deemed inexpedient to withdraw the force from La Paz. He also thought it proper to hold possession of San José, which had been once previously occupied and abandoned, and for that purpose stationed there a command of five officers and twenty men.† In the mean time Captain Lavallette had employed himself on an expedition up the Gulf of California, and was not immediately fallen in with, as had been anticipated.

\* Commodore Shubrick to the Secretary of the Navy, October 8th, 1847. Executive Document, No. 1, Senate, second Session of the thirtieth Congress, p. 1072.

† Executive Document, No. 1, Senate, second Session of the thirtieth Congress, p. 1074.

He had early been at San José, and having failed in meeting the commodore, he left his reports and put to sea with the two ships under his command. Having fallen in with a vessel bound to the port of Guyamas, he confiscated a portion of the cargo subject to seizure, and, with a view of putting a stop to the trade, proceeded up the gulf to that port. On the evening of the 16th of October the two vessels anchored in the outer roads, and on the following day entered the inner harbor of Guyamas. The Mexican flag was displayed on a fort, which apparently was one of some strength, and it was determined to attack the town.

Suitable positions having been selected, the vessels were warped to them, and a thirty-two pounder was planted on one of the islands in the harbor. Daylight on the morning of the 19th found the American vessels within range of the Mexican fort, but the enemy showed no disposition to open fire. Captain Lavallette sent a summons by the hands of Captain Montgomery, who was authorized to grant a delay of two hours in case of refusal, for the purpose of allowing the removal of the women and children. The Mexican commandante, Colonel Campuzano, requested five hours for deliberation, and believing that he could not increase his force materially in that time, Montgomery granted it. At the expiration of the five hours the answer was received, and was a positive refusal.

Meanwhile night had come on, and not a gun was fired by either party during its continuance.



A party of Americans landed a seven pounder on another of the islands within range of the shore, and at sunrise a single shot from the Congress gave the signal for action. The cannonade continued for three quarters of an hour without any reply. At the expiration of that time a white flag was displayed on shore in token of surrender. The town was occupied, and it was found that the Mexican garrison had evacuated it during the night, taking all the guns and munitions of war contained in the place.

Having issued a proclamation establishing a tariff and other regulations, Captain Lavallette ordered the destruction of the fortifications, and leaving the Portsmouth to watch the town, proceeded in the Congress to join the squadron, which he found at San José.\*

On the 8th of November, the Independence razee, Congress frigate, and sloop Cyane, sailed thence, under Shubrick's command, for Mazatlan. The harbor was entered on the evening of the 10th, and by ten o'clock the ships were in positions for action. At seven o'clock on the following morning the town was summoned, but Colonel Telles, who commanded the Mexican garrison, refused to surrender, or even to see the officers who bore the summons. He tore the paper to pieces in the presence of his troops, but, saving this exhibition of ill temper, he attempted no action against Amer-

\* Captain Lavallette's Report. Executive Document, No. 1, Senate, second Session of the thirtieth Congress, p. 1075.

ican men or material. After burying his guns and munitions, he evacuated the town, and answered the summons to the effect that, as he was at the camp of "Palos Prietos," beyond the reach of the American commander, he was not of necessity obliged to surrender. At one o'clock Shubrick landed with a strong party, and Mazatlan was quietly occupied under a convention regulating the terms of occupation, which was entered into with the civil authorities.\*

The place being considered one of great importance, fortifications were commenced, and the commodore addressed applications to Generals Scott and Taylor, and to Colonel Mason, suggesting that troops should be sent thither for the purpose of holding it. General Scott received the application by the 2d of December, but it was out of his power to force a garrison through to the Pacific at once.† It was manifestly out of the question for General Taylor to attempt any thing of the kind, and Colonel Mason would have been obliged to raise any force which he might have sent in Upper California. Nevertheless, Mazatlan was held for several succeeding months by the naval forces, without any other interruption than that occasioned by the annoyances of several small parties of the enemy in the vicinity. . In order to disperse them, several minor expeditions were sent out from

\* Commodore Shubrick's Report and Papers. Executive Document, No. 1, Senate, first Session of the thirtieth Congress, p. 1089-1096.

† Executive Document, No. 60, House of Representatives, first Session of the thirtieth Congress, p. 1035.

time to time, which several times brought them to skirmishes. These put a stop to their marauding to a degree, and the forces on land were left comparatively quiet.

During these events, an attack had been made on the Mexican village of Mulejé, on the eastern shore of Lower California. It was the point of debarkation of troops, and of communication, from the province of Sinaloa. As different parties thence had entered California for the purpose of fomenting insurrection, Commander Selfridge first caused it to be blockaded by a small vessel fitted out for the service. On the 30th of September he entered the anchorage in the sloop-of-war Dale. It was soon found that the place was in possession of Mexican forces, and on the same evening a small schooner was cut out from a creek in the immediate vicinity. On the 1st of October an officer was sent ashore with propositions to the alcalde of the village to the effect that he was to preserve a neutrality during the war, that he was to surrender all arms and other public property, and to abstain from all intercourse with Mexico. He refused to accept them, and referred to the military commandant of the forces from Sinaloa and Pineda. This person sent to Selfridge a communication remarkable for its insulting tenor. Upon receiving it, Selfridge organized a party for landing, and at two o'clock in the afternoon sent it ashore under Lieutenant Craven, covering the landing by a fire from the ship. The enemy was quickly driven away, and



the village was held until nightfall. On the following morning the Dale weighed anchor and sailed for La Paz.\*

The Mexican forces in Lower California having been organized under Pineda, he soon proceeded to attack the American posts at La Paz and San José. On the 16th of November, a party, nearly 300 strong, made a positive attack upon Lieutenant-colonel Burton's position, but it was repelled, with considerable loss to the assailants. The American loss was one killed and two slightly wounded. The enemy, however, continued to blockade the place by land, and a few skirmishes ensued from day to day until the 8th of December. Then the Cyane, which had been sent by Shubrick for the relief of the American posts, arrived, and the enemy retired from the immediate vicinity.

San José was attacked on the 19th of November in much the same manner, and with a like result. Lieutenant Heywood's small party resisted the attack until the 21st, when two sail (whaling ships) appeared in sight, and the attacking force retired.

So soon as they received intelligence of these affairs, Commodore Shubrick and Colonel Mason both sent re-enforcements to the different posts. The enemy continued in the field, but for some weeks abstained from making any positive attack, hoping to draw any party which might march against him into a disadvantageous ambuscade.

\* Commander Selfridge's Report. Executive Document, No. 1, Senate, second Session of the thirtieth Congress, p. 1196.

In the month of November the Dale relieved the Portsmouth at Guyamas, but, since the first seizure of the place, the enemy had recruited his parties in the vicinity to such an extent that it was impossible for the small American force present to prevent his occupation of the town. On the 17th Commander Selfridge landed with about sixty-five men, and a skirmish ensued, in which he was wounded. The enemy was subsequently driven from the place, without further loss on the part of the Americans.\*

In January, a party from the United States store-ships Lexington and Whiton landed at San Blas, and captured a boat and a few old guns. No attempt was made to hold possession of the place. Besides this affair, a few minor operations occurred in the vicinity of Guyamas, in which the enemy was worsted, with small attending loss on the part of the Americans.†

During the latter part of the month, the insurgents in Lower California recommenced active operations against the American posts, and reduced Heywood's party at San José to a very critical situation. On the 22d a considerable force appeared in the vicinity of that place, and succeeded in cutting off two midshipmen and six others, who were engaged at some little distance from the garrison. Having received information of the state of things,

\* Commander Selfridge's Report. Executive Document, No. 1, Senate, second Session of the thirtieth Congress, p. 1102.

† Lieutenants Bailey and Chatard's Reports. Executive Document, No. 1, Senate, second Session of the thirtieth Congress, p. 1127.

Shubrick dispatched the *Cyane* from La Paz to the relief of the place. She arrived at San José on the 14th of February, and found it still in possession of Heywood's party, which, however, was suffering severely from want of provisions and from sickness.

The garrison was not over-supplied at the outset, and a number of poor people of the village were of necessity included in the number to be fed. The place had been blockaded by the Californians since the 22d of January. On the 4th of February they approached and opened fire upon any of the garrison who exposed themselves. This annoyance continued until the 6th, when a sortie was made, which had the effect of driving them into the hills for that day. On the 7th, however, they returned, and took possession of all the village, except the buildings actually occupied by the garrison. Firing was kept up between the parties until the 15th, by which the Americans lost Midshipman M'Lanahan and three others killed, and four slightly wounded.\* On the morning of the 15th a party landed from the *Cyane*, under Commander Du Pont, and, after a brisk skirmish, in which the Californians suffered severely, and the Americans lost four in wounded, succeeded in driving the enemy and relieving the garrison.†

From this time, offensive operations on the part

\* Lieutenant Heywood's Reports. Executive Document, No. 1, Senate, second Session of the thirtieth Congress, p. 1143.

† Commander Du Pont's Report. Executive Document, No. 1, Senate, second Session of the thirtieth Congress, p. 1138.

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of the Californians ceased, and the two posts were left undisturbed.

On the 15th of March Lieutenant-colonel Burton sent a party to San Antonio, distant five leagues from La Paz, where a considerable force of the enemy was stationed. The march was made, the enemy's party was surprised and dispersed with loss, a few arms and munitions destroyed, and the prisoners taken at San José were released.\*

During a subsequent period, parties under Commander Du Pont and Lieutenant-colonel Burton scoured the country, and put down all opposition on the part of the inhabitants. Burton brought the enemy to a skirmish at Todos Santos, and routed him, with severe loss. The Americans lost none.† Pineda and other chiefs soon surrendered, and the disturbances in California were at an end. Affairs remained comparatively quiet for the subsequent duration of the war, though it was not until the month of August, 1848, that official information of its termination was received at Monterey by Colonel Mason.

On the 30th of March, however, Commodore Shubrick, at Mazatlan, received General Butler's order promulgating the armistice which had been entered into at Mexico, and took steps at once to insure the observance of its terms on the western coast of Mexico.

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\* Lieutenant-colonel Burton's Report. Executive Document, No. 1, Senate, second Session of the thirtieth Congress, p. 1149.

† *Idem ibidem*, p. 1154.

During the year 1847, General Price administered the government of the department of New Mexico without serious interruption, and early in 1848 he formed the determination of proceeding south with a command, for the purpose of operating against the enemy in the State of Chihuahua. Having made arrangements for the civil and military government of his proper department, on the 8th of February he marched from Santa Fé with a command consisting of three companies of United States dragoons (one acting as light artillery), six of Missouri horse, two of Missouri infantry, and four companies of Santa Fé volunteers (three of horse and one of artillery).

The march across the Jornada del Muerto was accomplished in safety, and the city of Chihuahua was approached in the early part of March. When within a short distance of it, Price was informed by the Mexicans of the conclusion of a treaty, but, fearing their dissimulation, he paid no attention to the report. Chihuahua was occupied on the 7th of March, and having learned that the enemy, in some force, was in position at Santa Cruz de las Rosales, sixty miles distant, Price determined to pursue and attack them.

He marched on the morning of the 8th with a force of about 250 mounted men, and arrived in front of the enemy at sunrise on the 9th. Immediate arrangements were made for attacking the place, and it was summoned. Governor Trias, who commanded, requested delay, on account of

the information of the conclusion of the treaty, which he assured General Price was correct and reliable. Price suspended the attack for a few days, but mean while he blockaded the town, and sent back for his artillery.

Nothing having been received confirmatory of the report of the conclusion of the treaty upon which Price chose to rely, and the re-enforcements having arrived, on the morning of the 16th dispositions were made for a positive attack. Two batteries, comprising in all ten pieces of light caliber, were located on the northwest and west of the town, and the mounted troops were placed in supporting positions. At half past ten o'clock they opened fire, which was maintained for about an hour. The Mexican force numbered about 900, and had eleven pieces of artillery of different calibers, besides several wall pieces. With these the American fire was returned with spirit, though without much effect.

It was reported that a large force of the enemy's cavalry was in position threatening the American rear. Price at once withdrew his whole command to an eminence about three quarters of a mile from the town. The movement was regarded by the enemy as one in retreat, and loud cheers announced his satisfaction. However, the report proved to be without foundation, as only a small party was seen, and that was quickly dispersed.

It was determined to make a more positive assault, and the batteries were located in their former



positions. The fire was resumed on both sides, and the American troops were dismounted and disposed around the town. Under cover of the cannonade they quickly entered it, and desultory fighting was kept up until nightfall, when the enemy surrendered.\*

In this action the American loss was one lieutenant, two corporals, and one private killed, and nineteen wounded. According to evidence submitted to the American general, the enemy lost two hundred and thirty-six in killed, besides many wounded—an almost incredible disparity. Governor Trias and forty-two officers were taken prisoners, and all the artillery and munitions fell into the hands of the Americans.

The superior officers were liberated on parole, and Price returned to Chihuahua with his command. There he remained until the receipt of official information of the conclusion of the treaty of peace.

\* General Price's Report. Executive Document, No 1, Senate, second Session of the thirtieth Congress, p. 113.

## CHAPTER XX.

Political Condition of the United States—Policy of the Administration—Recommendations of President Polk—Action of Congress—Instructions to General Scott—Action of the Government in reference to the Dispute of the General Officers—Court of Inquiry—Result—Action of the Government on Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo—Its Ratification.

State of Things in Mexico under General Butler—Affair of Sequalteplan—Condition of Mexican Government—Session of Congress—Action upon the Treaty—Its Ratification by Mexican Congress.

Evacuation of Mexico by the American Army—*General Observations.*

THE political condition of the United States at the opening of Congress in December, 1847, was materially different from that which had existed one year previously. The progress of the war had shown the people that the burden of expense, although heavy, was not so overwhelming as had been anticipated during the elections of the former year, and the continued hostility of Mexico, in spite of the offers of accommodation, had induced a belief in the necessity of maintaining the contest. More than all, the glory of the military operations of Buena Vista, Vera Cruz, Cerro Gordo, Contreras, Churubusco, Molino del Rey, Chapultepec, and the Garitas, with the host of minor affairs, had kept alive the military excitement of the nation, and done away with the impression which had been produced by the inactivity of the American army after the battles of Palo Alto and Resaca de la Palma, and the operations at Monterey. The

complaints on that head had entirely ceased, for the great goal which had long been in view had been reached, and the American army was in the capital of the Montezumas.

In the various public discussions which took place, the administration party, of course, supported the measures of President Polk and his cabinet. The assaults of the Whigs were less noisy than those which had been made during the canvass of the previous year, but still many distinguished leaders of that class continued in bitter denunciation of the conduct of the executive both in the commencement and prosecution of the war. Their course of conduct had the effect of diminishing their own popularity more than that of the administration. The argument made by the supporters of it, that these leaders were indirectly affording assistance to the enemy, as, indeed, they were and had been, began to take effect, and many immediate leaders of the opposition averred a different sentiment from that promulgated in the speeches of Mr. Clay and Mr. Webster. In this state of things, being desirous of opposing the measures of the administration, but fearful of compromising the party by an opposition to the war and withholding supplies, which it could be plainly foreseen would be unpopular, and therefore disastrous, the Whig majority in the House of Representatives found itself at the opening of the 30th Congress.

The policy of the government in reference to the continuation of hostilities was presented by Mr.



Polk in his message, and was treated of at some length. In so much as related to coercive measures, it was the same as that which General Scott had been ordered to adopt by occupying the country and raising military contributions. In answer to the questions proposed, "In what manner ought the war to be prosecuted? and what should be our future policy?" it was said by the President, "I can not doubt that we should secure and render available the conquests which we have already made, and that with this view we should hold and occupy with our naval and military forces all the posts, towns, cities, and provinces now in our occupation, or which may hereafter fall into our possession; that we should press forward our military operations, and levy such military contributions on the enemy as may, as far as practicable, defray the future expenses of the war."\*

In reference to the subject of indemnity, the course which had been looked to as that to be ultimately followed, and had been provided for by the prompt seizure of New Mexico and California, was recommended in the following paragraph:

"In the mean time, as Mexico refuses all indemnity, we should adopt measures to indemnify ourselves by appropriating permanently a portion of her territory. Early after the commencement of the war, New Mexico and the Californias were taken possession of by our forces. Our military

\* President's Message. Executive Document, No. 1, Senate, first Session of the thirtieth Congress, p. 12.

and naval commanders were ordered to conquer and hold them subject to be disposed of by a treaty of peace." "These provinces are now in our undisputed possession, and have been so for many months; all resistance on the part of Mexico having ceased within their limits, I am satisfied that they should never be surrendered to Mexico. Should Congress concur with me in this opinion, and that they should be retained by the United States as indemnity, I can perceive no good reason why the jurisdiction of the United States should not be extended over them. To wait for a treaty of peace, such as we are willing to make, by which our relations to them can not be changed, can not be good policy; while our own interests, and that of the people inhabiting them, require that a stable, responsible, and free government, under our authority, should as soon as possible be established over them."\*

The ultimate action of the government in case Mexico continued in her refusal to negotiate was spoken of, but, as the necessity was not immediate, such action could only be considered as contingent.

"With a people distracted and divided by contending factions, and a government subject to constant changes by successive revolutions, the continued successes of our arms may fail to secure a satisfactory peace. In such event, it may become

\* President's Message. Executive Document, No. 1, Senate, first Session of the thirtieth Congress, p. 12.

proper for our commanding generals in the field to give encouragement and assurances of protection to the friends of peace in Mexico in the establishment and maintenance of a free republican government, of their own choice, able and willing to conclude a peace which would be just to them, and secure to us the indemnity we demand. This may become the only method of obtaining such a peace. Should such be the result, the war which Mexico has forced upon us would thus be converted into an enduring blessing to herself. After finding her torn and distracted by factions, and ruled by military usurpers, we should then leave her with a republican government, in the enjoyment of real independence and domestic peace and prosperity, performing all her relative duties in the family of nations, and promoting her own happiness by wise laws and their faithful execution."

"If, after affording this encouragement and protection, and after all the persevering and sincere efforts we have made, from the moment Mexico commenced the war, and prior to that time, to adjust our difference with her, we shall ultimately fail, then we shall have exhausted all honorable means in pursuit of peace, and must continue to occupy the country with our troops, taking the full measure of indemnity into our own hands, and must enforce the terms which honor demands."\*

The action indicated in these paragraphs is in

\* President's Message. Executive Document, No. 1, Senate, first Session of the thirtieth Congress, p. 15.



keeping with the system of exceedingly gradual coercion which the United States had adopted and followed from the first. Although the levy of contributions might be considered as the next step to taking permanent possession, yet the intermediate one suggested by Mr. Polk was such as proved that the previous declarations of the administration concerning the object of the war had been made in good faith ; for, notwithstanding the complete success of the American army, and the ease with which the conquest of Mexico might have been consummated, that object was yet disavowed as it had been. It was only looked to as a last resort, after the intermediate step had failed. That intermediate step being the attempted establishment of a stable government in Mexico by the countenance and protection of the American forces, would induce the belief that the administration desired nothing more than such territory as could be fairly demanded as indemnity. The proposed course of action was doubtless counseled more by a wise foresight of the interests of the United States than for the purpose of benefiting Mexico (as, indeed, must have been the case in the pursuit of true policy), yet it was truly said that it could not fail to give great advantages to that distracted country over any even which she had possessed at the breaking out of hostilities. It was the course, in fact, partially followed by Mr. Trist and by General Scott ; and had their action been based upon it from the first and frankly avowed, the message

of the President might have been quoted by them as partial authority.

The recommendations made to Congress for providing for the support of the war were to authorize such loans as might be required to fill the treasury to the amount of the estimated expenditures, and the raising of ten additional regiments to the regular army to serve during the war, as recommended in the report of Mr. Marcy.\*

The public debt of the United States had been increased, from the commencement of Mr. Polk's administration to the opening of Congress, by the sum of twenty-seven millions eight hundred and fifty-nine dollars and seventy-eight cents.† A very small sum, when the various military operations which had been accomplished in two years are remembered, and also that a tariff modified to suit the free trade policy of the Democratic party had been the principal source of revenue.

The amount of the loan which Congress was called upon to authorize in order to provide for the expenditures of the government until the close of the fiscal year ending on the thirtieth of June, 1849, in the anticipation of the continuation of the war, was eighteen millions five hundred thousand dollars. But with this estimate, no allowance was made for the amount of military contributions to be collected from Mexico, and the loan was to be reduced by such amount. As a

\* President's Message. Executive Document, No. 1, Senate, first Session of the thirtieth Congress, p. 15.

† Idem ibidem, p. 23.

further means of raising revenue, a war duty upon tea and coffee was urged, as it had previously been, as well as a graduation of the price of the public lands. It was hoped that these two measures would considerably increase the resources of the government.\*

These principal recommendations, and various others of minor importance, went before the American Congress, and their discussion in the different houses soon commenced. The policy of the administration was of course denounced by the opposition, although it had no distinguishing principle by which it was guided, and its leaders suggested no method of settling the difficulty. Bills were early introduced into the House of Representatives for the provision of the different re-enforcements of men and means demanded, and although their progress was delayed by attacks upon the policy of the executive, yet the sentiment of the country was such that it was evidently a matter of necessity for the Whig house to pass them.

The measure of establishing civil governments in New Mexico and California was, however, of a different complexion, and the matter of the *proviso*, which had delayed the action of the former Congress upon the appropriation for diplomatic purposes, was still a subject of discussion. It was, moreover, wanted for a question in the approaching presidential contest by certain members of both

\* President's Message. Executive Document, No. 1, Senate, first Session of the thirtieth Congress, p. 24, 25.



parties, who, while they were willing that it should be used for the furtherance of their own views, either for opposition to the administration or for an increase of sectional popularity, cared not to see so faithful a cause of agitation done away with by the establishment of territorial governments. In the absence of any treaty with Mexico, and of any acknowledged title, was found a sufficient argument to prevent legislation upon the subject, although it was not sufficient to prevent the discussion of the allowances or prohibition of negro slavery within the territories in question.

The first new provision for the war being monetary, the action of the War Department was confined to forwarding recruits and material as fast as they were raised, or the latter became necessary, to Mexico, and to the different instructions for a change of policy, contained in the dispatches which have been referred to.

On the 14th of December, Mr. Marcy sent the President's Message and his own annual report to General Scott, and to the former he was referred for the views of the President in regard to the prosecution of the war. The orders contained in the accompanying letter were in great measure a continuation of those before given for raising military contributions. In regard to the policy indicated in the message, of supporting the Mexican government, the secretary wrote as follows :

“Our object is to obtain acceptable terms of peace within the earliest practicable period, and it

is apprehended that this object can not be speedily attained without making the enemy feel that he is to bear a considerable part of the burden of the war."

"Should there not be at this time a government in Mexico of sufficient stability to make peace, or should the authority which there exists be adverse to it, and yet a large and influential portion of the people really disposed to put an end to hostilities, it is desirable to know what prospect there is that the latter could, with the countenance and protection of our arms, organize a government which would be willing to make peace, and able to sustain relations of peace with us. It is presumed that your opportunities of knowing the disposition of the people of Mexico will enable you to furnish your government with correct information on this subject, and the President desires to be furnished with your views thereon."\*

The dispatch from which the above is extracted was not received by the general-in-chief before the latter part of January.† By that time Mr. Trist's unauthorized negotiations had so far progressed that it could have had no influence upon his action. The course which he followed must have been determined long before, although the strongly expressed desire for the speedy conclusion of a treaty may have confirmed him in the determina-

\* Mr. Marcy to General Scott. Executive Document, No. 60, House of Representatives, first Session of the thirtieth Congress, p. 1037.

† General Scott to Mr. Marcy. *Idem*, p. 1081.

tion of awaiting the decision of the authorities at Washington on the treaty, before continuing his advance, during the time intermediate between the receipt of the dispatch and the conclusion of the treaty.

Before any further instructions were issued from the War Department, the dispatches of the general-in-chief and Mr. Trist, which left the city of Mexico early in December, arrived in Washington. Mr. Trist's voluminous and bitter communications to the State Department gave information of the "incomprehensible and unimaginable" impracticability of his character, which, indeed, had been so fully demonstrated in his previous proceedings as to induce his recall. Besides the dispatch of the general-in-chief of the date of December 4th, there was contained in the package transmitted by him a duplicate of his letter of July 25th, full of complaints and insubordinate expressions against the department (and which it might have been considered would have increased the reputation of the author as the victim of persecutions, especially as, notwithstanding them, he had been successful in his military operations), and the charges against Generals Worth and Pillow, and Lieutenant-colonel Duncan, and the accompanying papers.

The existence of such a state of things in Mexico as was revealed by these documents could not be viewed otherwise than with deep regret. A mutinous commissioner, who openly avowed his disobedience, and made use of his state correspond-



ence as a vehicle of slander and calumny, was about to undertake unauthorized negotiations which might well have been expected to compromise the United States, and to complicate the difficulties which already existed in the way of negotiation; and a general-in-chief taking care to forward a letter at least highly disrespectful, and whose charges against his officers highest in rank announced that he had quarreled seriously in his own camp and for an insufficient cause, and whose dispatches plainly told that he had but little respect for his government, and that he intended to secure justice to himself on the strength of his military reputation—these two were the apparent chief representatives of the United States, and well might the state of things create anxiety at Washington.

The action of the President and cabinet was not immediate, and full time was taken to consider the various questions which arose as to the manner of correcting the evil state of things. It was not until the 13th of January, 1848, that orders were issued in relation to the matters.

The charges against General Worth were those of which the illegality was most clearly presented; for they were for disrespect contained in the matter of an appeal from the general-in-chief to the Secretary of War concerning "General Orders No. 349." The President could not recognize the right of General Scott to make such charge, and to bring an officer to trial thereon, while the accu-

sations which he had made against his superior, according to the method prescribed by law for presenting them, remained uninvestigated. He therefore ordered that the charges against Worth should be laid aside, until those preferred by him against the general-in-chief should be disposed of.\*

The charges which General Scott had preferred against General Pillow were exceedingly voluminous, comprising eighteen pages of written matter. Although the latter officer had been arrested for sending an appeal directly to the Secretary of War, and for the matter therein contained, yet the first alleged offense was omitted in the charges, and the matter of the appeal was but slightly noticed. The substantive matter consisted of the alleged production of the "Leonidas" letter, of alleged errors in his official reports, and of the substance of remarks made by him concerning the effect of the battle of Molino del Rey upon the energies of the general-in-chief. The various official commendations which had been lavished upon General Pillow in General Scott's reports and correspondence, of which several were ostensibly the consequence of his own personal observation, were entirely falsified by the charges. Had they been true, and based upon substantial facts, General Pillow would justly have been presented in a very unenviable position before the country.

\* Mr. Marcy to General Scott, January 13th, 1848. Executive Document, No. 60, House of Representatives, first Session of the thirtieth Congress, p. 1040.

These charges, those against Lieutenant-colonel Duncan, which were for the authorship of the "Tampico" letter, and those preferred by General Worth against General Scott, were considered as subjects for immediate investigation. By the orders of the President, all of them were to be investigated by a court of inquiry, and, in consequence of the difficulty, the general-in-chief was relieved from the command of the army, in compliance with a request contained in his letter of the date of June 4th from Puebla. Generals Worth and Pillow, and Lieutenant-colonel Duncan, were to be released from arrest; and, after the court had finished its proceedings in the matter of the charges preferred by Worth against Scott, it was intended that those preferred by the latter against the former should be taken into consideration.\*

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These instructions and orders were received in Mexico, and caused the relinquishment of the command of the army to General Butler, as stated in a preceding chapter.

The court first met at Puebla, but after a short session adjourned to the city of Mexico, where it commenced business on the 16th of March. Prior to this date, certain efforts were made to induce the parties to put a stop to the proceedings (which it

\* Mr. Marcy to General Scott, January 13th, 1848. Executive Document, No. 60, House of Representatives, first Session of the thirtieth Congress, p. 1040.



was feared, from the nature of things, could but be discreditable to the service), by dropping the different matters of controversy and withdrawing the charges. In consideration of the decision and action of the authorities at Washington, General Worth did withdraw his charges, although against the wish of General Scott, who assumed, as he said, "an attitude of defiance" toward his accuser. The action of the general-in-chief in reference to the charges prepared by himself was in some respects similar; for the reasons that he had applied for a court-martial on General Worth, and that his application had been refused, that Worth had been released and restored to command, and that he had been stricken down from his high position, and others, he refused to prosecute the case against Worth. In regard to Duncan, the action of the government was alleged as a cause for withdrawing the charges entirely, provided Lieutenant-colonel Duncan would make certain admissions concerning the alleged errors in the "Tampico" letter. Duncan refused, although he professed regret in case any of the statements there made were actually erroneous. He believed them to be true, and would not take simple statements, without other evidence, as proof of their error. Nevertheless, General Scott withdrew the charges.

In Pillow's case, in view of nine considerations, not in connection with the matter of the charges, of which the truth was reasserted, General Scott declined to prosecute before the preliminary court

without being ordered to do so.\* This course was not acceptable to Pillow, whose honor was too deeply affected by the matter to allow him to rest quiet under the various scandalous imputations. After combating the considerations urged by the general-in-chief in a paper submitted to the court, he presented a second, in which he made a strenuous and urgent application for it to issue its order for him to prosecute.† General Scott replied, and on account of the inconvenience to which he would be subjected, awaiting the decision of the authorities at Washington on the action of the parties, he consented to go on with the case.‡ The proceedings of the court commenced at once.

They were tedious and lengthy, and after being carried on in Mexico until the 21st of April, the court adjourned to the United States. It continued its sessions at New Orleans, Louisville, Frederic, and Washington, and finally closed and submitted its finding and opinion on the 1st of July, 1849. The substance of them is contained in the following closing paragraphs:

“On reviewing the whole case, it will be seen that the points on which the conduct of General Pillow has been disapproved by the court are his claiming, in certain passages of the paper No. 1,§

\* Executive Document, No. 65, Senate, first Session of the thirtieth Congress, p. 3.

† Idem, p. 5-10.

‡ Idem, p. 11.

§ “No. 1,” a paper furnished at the request of one Treaner by General Pillow, containing memoranda concerning the battle of Contreras not originally published in newspapers. See Executive Document, No. 65, Senate, first Session of the thirtieth Congress, p. 389.

and in his official report of the battles of Contreras and Churubusco, a larger degree of participation in the merit of the movements appertaining to the battle of Contreras than is substantiated by the evidence, or he is entitled to; and also the language above quoted, in which that claim is referred to in a letter to General Scott.”\*

“But as the movements actually ordered by General Pillow at Contreras on the 19th were emphatically approved by General Scott at the time, and as the conduct of General Pillow in the brilliant series of operations carried on to such triumphant issue by General Scott in the valley of Mexico appears by the several official reports of the latter and otherwise to have been highly meritorious—from these and other considerations, the court is of opinion that no further proceedings against General Pillow in the case are called for by the interest of the public service.”†

Thus far the court went in reference to the conduct of General Pillow, but it was not its duty, nor did it attempt to express an opinion or to give the facts which were elicited concerning the conduct of his prosecutor. In the previous portions of the finding, every serious accusation and charge against Pillow was reported as not substantiated. But while the prosecutor had failed in proving the authorship of any published letter from the de-

\* Correspondence. Executive Document, No. 60, House of Representatives, first Session of the thirtieth Congress, p. 1019.

† Executive Document, No. 65, Senate, first Session of the thirtieth Congress, p. 335.



fendant, or those immediately connected with him, the latter had proved that five different productions had been written by officers of the staff of the general-in-chief, all highly laudatory of him, and of which two were with his knowledge and consent written for publication.\* The first of these was an introduction to a series of intercepted Mexican letters from the pen of Lieutenant-colonel Hitchcock, and contained laudations of nobody else but General Scott. He stated that he gave authority for it, and once that, had the printer's account been presented, he would have paid it out of public money; and this had been published before the issue of General Order No. 349, in which self-puffing was so strongly and justly condemned! The second of them was written in January, 1848, by the same person, who read the greater portion of it to General Scott, and with his knowledge sent it to a friend in the United States, who was expected to use the material of it for publications of his own. The friend was a violent partisan, and published it entire, by which the authorship was displayed. The letter was full of mendacious abuse of Worth, Pillow, and Duncan, and of the most scurrilous character. The attempt to prejudice the public mind in the United States against officers already in arrest and awaiting trial was one which required little reflection to be condemned, as it

\* Testimony of General Scott, Captain Huger, Captain Lee, and Lieutenant-colonel Hitchcock. Executive Document, No. 65, Senate, first Session of the thirtieth Congress, p. 48, 49, 55, 89.

was, by many, if not all of the respectable officers of the army.

The whole effect of the proceedings of the court, and of the testimony elicited before it, which was published as it was given, was to clear the fame of General Pillow from the cloud which for a time had rested upon it, on account of the vindictive abuse of a party press and the scandalous nature of the charges, backed as they were by the prestige of the general-in-chief of the victorious American army. They too produced the impression, and truly, that the whole affair of the different quarrels had its origin in unfounded suspicions and jealousy on the part of the general-in-chief, and that the army and the country had been disturbed by a scandalous quarrel without any reasonable cause, to the injury of the reputation of the service. Another effect which was probably produced, and, if it were, it was one of great import to the prosecutor, was, that the Whig party dropped the serious consideration of his name as the candidate for the presidency.

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General Scott's subsequent letters to the department, being received at Washington after the letter of supersedure had been sent, were, of course, unanswered except in one instance. Soon after he was relieved from the command (February 20th, 1848), he addressed a lengthy epistle of complaint to Mr. Marcy, in which his wrongs and grievances

were recounted in extenso, in no very respectful manner. This production was called for by the Whig House of Representatives for publication. The call brought it out, but it also brought out Mr. Marcy's reply, which was so complete a vindication of his conduct that the effect of the complaints in the letter of General Scott was absolutely worse than nothing for the benefit of himself or of his partisans.\*

The treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo was received at Washington about the 20th of February. The result of the unauthorized action on the part of Mr. Trist had not been seriously anticipated, and it was not without a full sense of the various extraneous circumstances which had attended the conclusion of the treaty, that the matter was considered by the President. Nevertheless, as the commissioners on the part of Mexico had been duly authorized to act by the existing government, and as they had acted with a full knowledge of the recall of Mr. Trist, it was believed that the treaty was as far binding upon Mexico as an unratified treaty could be. Of course it was not upon the United States, in any manner, without the action of constitutional authority.

The terms of the treaty were in many things the same as those contained in the projet originally carried out by Mr. Trist, so far as related to boundary. By them the territories of New Mexi-

\* Correspondence. Executive Document, No. 60, House of Representatives, first Session of the thirtieth Congress, p. 1218-1270.



co and Upper California were given to the United States, and Mexico relinquished all claim to Texas or the country between the Nueces and the Rio Grande. In consideration of the extension acquired by the boundaries of the northern republic, Mexico was to receive the sum of fifteen millions of dollars, to be paid by installments, and in addition to this, the United States were to assume the debt owed by Mexico to their citizens. The gross amount allowed was, with this addition to the fifteen millions to be paid, nearly twenty millions of dollars. The treaty was encumbered with certain stipulations concerning the grants of land made by Mexico within the ceded territories and Texas, and others concerning protection to be given from the Indians to the northern frontiers of Mexico. An additional and secret article gave the right of delay in the ratification, in case it were impossible for Mexico to comply with the stipulation contained in the treaty itself.

After some time spent in consideration, Mr. Polk determined to refer the matter to the Senate, and on the 23d of February sent the treaty in. His accompanying message was one of reference rather than of recommendation, but in regard to the articles relating to grants of land and to Indian protection, as well as the secret article, it was submitted whether they should not be rejected.

The committee of the Senate on foreign relations reported the treaty without amendment on the 28th of February, and it at once became the sub-

ject of discussion in secret session. It was violently opposed for many reasons, but was finally ratified, March 10th, 1848, by the vote of thirty-eight yeas to fourteen nays, with amendments which obviated the difficulties presented in the articles referred to.\* This having been done, the legislative action of the United States in regard to the treaty was accomplished. For consummating the measure and exchanging the ratifications, which was permitted by one of the amendments to take place at the seat of the Mexican government instead of at Washington, Messrs. Sevier and Clifford were appointed commissioners. They proceeded at once to Mexico, and by the time of their arrival, the government of that republic had made some progress toward such an establishment that it could take action in the matter of the ratification.

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The military operations which had taken place while General Butler held command of the army in Mexico were but operations against the guerillas on the route of communication, and within striking distance of the capital. Of these the most important was one under General Lane, directed against Padre Jarauta. Lane marched from Mexico on the 17th of February, with a command of some four hundred men, dragoons, rifles, and Texan rangers. Taking unfrequented and sometimes cir-

\* Executive Document, No. 52, Senate, first Session of the thirtieth Congress.

cuitous routes, he advanced on Tulancingo, where he hoped to surprise General Paredes and Jarauta, who had lately been there with his party. Lane entered the town on the 22d, but Jarauta had left three days before. Paredes had remained and barely escaped capture. In a few days information was received that Jarauta was in position at Sequalteplan, a town in the mountains, seventy-five miles north of Tulancingo. By a forced march that distance was accomplished, and the place reached by daybreak on the 25th.

The Texans entered the town at a gallop, and, having received a fire from a quartel on the outskirts, continued on and engaged the enemy within it. Polk's dragoons and rifles came up and took up the affair at the first quartel, from which the enemy was soon routed with loss. The fight was kept up for some time in the streets, but finally the whole guerilla, sorely cut up and dispersed, took refuge in flight. One hundred and twenty Mexicans fell in the affair, which had the effect of putting a stop to Jarauta's operations, either in a military or plundering way, for some time. The Americans had six men wounded.\*

In some manner, during the continuance of the engagement, fire was communicated to the thatched roofs of some houses, and the whole village was soon in flames. Various excesses were committed by the troops in the confusion, which were not

\* General Lane's Official Report. Executive Document, No. 1, Senate, second Session of the thirtieth Congress, p. 95.



very vigorously repressed, and gave good ground for bitter complaints on the part of Mexican inhabitants. Lane returned to Mexico on the 1st of March, and the armistice prevented any future operations.

The American army remained in the positions which it held at the conclusion of the convention, and, saving its occupation, Mexico was as much in peace as that distracted country usually is. The diligences were placed upon the roads, business was brisk, as the merchants hastened to make the most of the American tariff, and the anticipation of the speedy ratification of the treaty was entertained by many. Nevertheless, there were as many who seriously doubted whether it would be ratified by the Mexican Congress in time to be exchanged at Washington on the 2d of June, as was generally understood to be necessary for its validity.

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The elections which were held during the armistice resulted in the choice of General Herrera as the president, and the election of the full number of deputies. As before, however, the latter were exceedingly dilatory in assembling at Queretaro, and it was not until the 3d of May that a quorum of Congress was present. Peña y Peña delivered his message to the Senate and deputies in person, in which he strongly urged upon them the importance of acting upon the treaty, which was to decide the fate of Mexico as a nation. The reply of

Elloriaga, the president of the Congress, was of a complimentary nature to the Provisional President, and so far was indicative of the predominance of peaceful policy, though necessarily it could not be looked upon as an index of action.

The first business to be transacted was the election of a provisional president, for the official votes were not all in. Those of one state had doubtless been delayed in order to relieve the incoming administration from any responsibility of the treaty, and to leave it, as well as any advantages, with that of Peña y Peña, which was already compromised. Peña y Peña was elected to serve for the short period, and the treaty was laid before Congress on the 10th of May.

The same evening there were various indications of a pronunciamiento, and, in consequence, the troops present at the temporary capital were ordered immediately under arms. The disturbance, however, proved to be nothing, and, inasmuch as Congress had met, every thing was favorable to the ratification. The government had made a forced loan for the purpose of defraying certain expenses attending the action of Congress to the amount of one hundred and fifty thousand dollars, and doubtless some refractory members were induced to give their support to the treaty by the means of it. The sentiment of the country about this time took a turn in favor of peace. Paredes, Almonte, and Jarauta were moving about the states of the north, and endeavoring to keep up the

war excitement; but they were too late, and their efforts produced no positive action.

After a lengthy and fiery discussion, on the 19th of May the treaty was ratified by the deputies of the Mexican Congress by a vote of fifty-one to thirty-five. Upon the receipt of this intelligence, Messrs. Sevier and Clifford at once left Mexico for Queretaro. They arrived there on the 24th, and on the same day the treaty was ratified by the Senate by a vote of thirty-three to four. The treaty was complete, and on the 30th the respective ratifications of the two governments were exchanged. But this did not take place until a discussion of the matter and an explanation, called for by Rosa, had obtained from Messrs. Sevier and Clifford an unauthorized "protocol" concerning certain articles affecting titles of land and the rights of Mexican citizens in the ceded territories. This "protocol," though not sufficient to affect the validity of the treaty, was yet sufficient to raise some excitement at an after period. The war, however, ceased from the date of the exchange of the ratifications.

The certainty of the event being known at the head-quarters of the army, General Butler announced on the 29th of May that the war was ended, and that the object of it—a treaty of peace just and honorable to both nations—had been duly ratified. In the same orders, the directions for the conduct of the homeward march were issued. Preparations had for some time been in progress,



and the troops at the different outposts at Toluca, Cuernavaca, and Pachuca were ordered in. Patterson's volunteers marched from the capital for Vera Cruz on the 30th of May, and the other divisions followed from time to time.

On the morning of the 12th of June the American guards were relieved by troops of the Mexican army, and the American flag on the palace was struck, under a salute from Mexican batteries. The Mexican standard was run up with the like compliment, and immediately after, Worth's division, the rearmost of the army, marched from the capital. It was at once occupied by the Mexican troops, and the functionaries of the government entered it on the same day.

As the different columns of the American army arrived at Jalapa, they halted to await the preparation of transports at Vera Cruz, and as they were ready, marching quickly through the tierra caliente, sailed thence for the United States. The evacuation of the northern as well as of the southern line was rapidly accomplished, and during the month of July the territory of Mexico was entirely freed from the presence of the invading army.

The volunteers were discharged from the service upon their return, the regiments of the regular army for the war were disbanded according to the law of their organization, and the veteran regiments of the line, or such of them as were left after the continued scenes of battle from first to last which they had gone through, were scatter-

ed at the different posts throughout the United States.

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By this war the United States acquired an immense extent of territory, of which the value and consequence are yet to be developed. It is too soon to tell the effect to be produced by the acquisition. Such consequences as have followed it immediately could in no manner have been imagined or foretold. Difficulties have followed as they invariably follow the consummation of all human desires, either personal or national. Party strife has found abundant aliment in the various questions which have arisen concerning the disposition of the conquest. The discovery of the astonishing amount of gold within its limits has already given scope for the exercise of human avarice, which may prove, as in other days and under other circumstances, most eminently disastrous. But the effects remain to be seen, for the wisest statesmen are seldom aright in their predictions of consequences which are to flow from such causes as already have existence. Certainly it would be no easy matter to foretell them in this age of ever-changing progression, when the world is continually convulsed, and event follows event with such startling rapidity. Some consequences, however, are apparent, and, as the more immediate, may be commented upon.

The uninterrupted success of the American arms

II.—S s

in the course of the war, and the conspicuous valor of the troops, have raised the warlike reputation of the nation to a higher degree than ever before it had attained, notwithstanding the success which often attended its armies and navies in conflicts with those of the greatest power of the earth. The success was indeed unexampled, and must forever be a subject of congratulation. It has been already, and the glitter of military renown has been seized and used by politicians for party purposes. A victorious general has been elevated to the chief magistracy of the country, in the admiration of the people for military virtue, of which the popular criterion is, and must be, military success. With this, however, the good qualities of the individual have exercised their influences. Not the least of them is the single-hearted devotion to the service of the country apparent in many of his deeds and his official communications. Indeed, it may be believed that to that he owes his elevation to the proudest civil position of the western continent, if not of the world. If so, in the effect there is proof of the true method of obtaining the end of laudable ambition. "Be just and fear not; let all the ends thou aimest at be thy country's, thy God's, and truth's." A course of conduct in accordance with this precept has seldom failed of success, if success were desired, and it failed not in the case of the present President of the United States. To have complied with it strictly would indeed have been difficult, for no man is or can be sufficiently free



from the faults and follies of human nature to fulfill the requirements. Errors were undoubtedly committed in the action of the general in his conduct of the war, which have been noticed in the foregoing narrative, as they appeared to the author. But his military operations were successful in their despite, and when taken in connection with the popular belief in his patriotism, all of them were overlooked. Statesmen and generals were cast aside, and, being nominated, the power of his popularity gave the Whig party a president. He has appeared upon the public stage in a new character, and upon his action, yet to be accomplished, the world and his countrymen will pronounce a judgment in future days.

The military operations of the war, whether upon the northern or southern lines, or in the distant portions of the country of Mexico, have their chief recommendation in the bravery and hard fighting of the army. System was wanting throughout, and the various difficulties and inconveniences inseparable from the policy of the United States, in depending upon a volunteer or temporary army in any war, were fully apparent. The latter caused faulty action on the part of the authorities at Washington, and this, undoubtedly, to some extent, caused the various errors of the different generals. All errors combined made the army throughout most of the operations but little more than a forlorn hope in numerical strength, and left it unsupplied with many necessities in material.

The causes of its triumphs, when laboring under many disadvantages, must be looked for in the character of the troops and in the various moral deficiencies on the part of the enemy. The bravery of the army did much, and its action astonished the world ; yet it must not be supposed that, had it not been aided by the peculiar state of the Mexican nation, it could ever have achieved such triumphs. Aided as it was, its operations were of a peculiar nature, and, save in some of the details and minor movements, can never be safely quoted as military precedents, except in case of hostilities on the same field and under similar circumstances. It may be that, at some future day, the cause of some of the evils confidently predicted by Mexicans as necessarily befalling the United States in consequence of the war, will be found in the very success of their armies ; for if the same system is pursued in a conflict with another power, if the same tardiness in preparation at the outset, the same disregard of the military art, and the same rash enterprise characterize the conduct of the war as characterized that of the war with Mexico on the part of government and generals, disasters, and those, too, of a serious nature, must inevitably ensue. The duty of preparation will be a new one when presented to the government, and in case of the occurrence of the contingency, it will remain to be seen whether the wisdom of a future Congress, the energy of a future executive, and the bravery and discipline of a future army, can main-

tain the reputation for warlike prowess which has been gained.

The conduct of the war on the part of the United States, in so far as it was carried on in accordance with the requirements of the spirit of the age in favor of humanity to non-combatants, and the treatment of conquered enemies, was remarkable. But few instances can be stated where the conduct of officers and soldiers in this regard was discreditable to their country. The example was not followed by Mexican authorities or people, and their conduct in the few events of their success was such as still further to degrade the national character.

But the effect of the war upon Mexico has been and will continue to be greatly beneficial. The first great apparent good is that the prestige of the army of the country, which had been such an incubus from the time of its independence, and ever so ready an instrument in the hands of factious officials for raising pronunciamientos and discords, has been entirely swept away. It now appears in its true colors both at home and abroad, worthless and imbecile as it really is, and can hardly ever regain the preponderance in national affairs which it enjoyed before the war.

That this has been the case is demonstrated by the comparative quietude which has existed in Mexico since the conclusion of peace, and the at least apparent stability of a government administered upon something like republican principles. The intercourse with citizens of the United States,



which has been one of the consequences of the war, can not be otherwise than beneficial to Mexico, and it may be that in future time she will truly follow the example of the northern republic. But before that time the superstition of her people must be eradicated. The primary causes for that end may have had place already, and the event will be gradually developed, if the improvement of the world is to be accomplished, to an extent, by the regeneration of Mexico. Otherwise the temporary benefits which she may have derived will soon be overshadowed by the clouds of superstition, and domestic difficulties and foreign wars will continue until the last of the Spanish-Mexican race shall have passed away.

## APPENDIX TO VOL. II.

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### No. 1.

*Memoranda concerning Chalco route, given on the 14th of August by Capt. R. E. Lee, of the Engineers, at the time on duty at Gen. Scott's quarters, and subsequently acting chief engineer of the army, to Capt. James L. Mason, of the Engineers, on duty with Gen. Worth, for the guidance of the latter in his movement around Lake Chalco.*

"From *Chalco* to *Tuiscingo*, about four miles, the road is represented good. The causeway, about five miles long, from *Tuiscingo* to *Tuliahualco*, though probably partially under water, is *practicable*. The road passing *south* of the lake between those points is represented to be *rough*, and longer. From *Tuliahualco* you can communicate with the north side of the lake by the causeways leading to *San Francisco*, and by a good road to *Istapalapa* or *Ayotla*. The causeway is partially submerged with water, though practicable for foot or cavalry.

"There is said to be a direct road from *Tuliahualco* to *San Augustin*, though *rough*. A smoother road, if not interrupted by the rise of the lake, passes near the border of the lake to *Xochomilco*, a village of six or eight thousand inhabitants; by keeping the boats abreast of the column, the communication with the north side of the lake can be kept up to that point.

"From *Xochomilco* the road is said to turn off from the lake toward *San Augustin*, and places you upon the main *Acapulco* road to the city of Mexico. There may probably be a route nearer the lake shore, by which the communication with the *north* shore may be continued until the rear of *Mexicalcingo* is reached."

## No. 2.

LIEUT. COL. DUNCAN'S REPORT OF HIS RECONNAISSANCE.

"Chalco, Mexico, August 14th, 1847.

"GENERAL,—I have the honor to submit the following report in relation to the route between this point and Tuliáhualco, a reconnaissance of which I have just completed.

"The road from Chalco to Tuliáhualco passes around Lake Chalco, along the base of the hills that form the valley; it passes through the villages of Tuisingo, Tesumpa, Tetelco, San Juan, and Tuliáhualco; there are several other small villages and haciendas within a short distance, say one or two miles from the road; the road is not only practicable, but, as a whole, excellent, and, as far as the reconnaissance was made, not easily *obstructed* or *defended*. All accounts agree that the road from Tuliáhualco to San Augustin is good, and every indication showed that this road must even be better than the part included in the reconnaissance.

"From Tuliáhualco to San Augustin is differently estimated from three and a half to four leagues, say ten miles at most.

"I left this place with an infantry command at five o'clock this morning, and returned at two P.M.; the distance from Chalco to Tuliáhualco is about five leagues.

"The reconnoitering party consisted of twenty-five dragoons and three hundred and thirty foot, rank and file, supported by a command of three hundred men stationed at Tuisingo, and another command of three hundred in supporting distance of the Tuisingo command.

"I saw some cattle on the slope of the hills, though not very many. The road passes through a fertile region, and must furnish forage in abundance [dry forage]. Grain was inexhaustible. I made few inquiries in relation to supplies of any kind, for reasons unnecessary to mention.

"Very respectfully, your most obedient servant,

(Signed)

"JAMES DUNCAN,

"Brevet Lieutenant Colonel.

"Major-general Worth," &c., &c.



**No. 3.**

## CIRCULAR LETTER TO GENERAL OFFICERS.

“Head-quarters of the Army, Tacubaya, August 31st, 1847.

“GENERAL, — I am instructed by the general-in-chief to say that, although he has full confidence in the faith of the Mexican government, yet he has reason to believe that, at a meeting of general officers in the city of Mexico yesterday, the project of breaking the armistice was discussed, with a view, perhaps, of attacking some one of our divisions.

“Although the general-in-chief does not consider this a probable event, yet he desires your division to be held compact, that it may be prepared for any contingency.

“I am, very respectfully,

“Your obedient servant,

(Signed) “H. L. SCOTT, A. A. A. G.

“Major-general Pillow, U. S. Army, Commanding Third Division.”

**No. 4.**

## GENERAL ORDERS, No. 279.

“Head-quarters of the Army, Tacubaya, September 7th, 1847.

“All the corps of the army will be approximated as soon as practicable, for a united attack, by different approaches, upon the capital.

“For this purpose, the sick and wounded, the spare means of transportation, tents and stores of Quitman’s and Twiggs’s divisions, will be placed in general hospital and depôt at Miscoaque without delay, when those divisions will respectively evacuate San Augustin and San Angel, and march to the general depôt to receive instructions.

“It is expected that Quitman’s division will be at the general depôt by twelve o’clock to-morrow.

“Some time this evening, about six o’clock, Twiggs will advance a brigade by the San Angel road to within two or three miles of the city. He will receive particular instructions for this brigade, and also for the hour of evacuating, to-morrow, San Angel, which

will probably be after Major-general Quitman has passed toward Miscoaque.

“Miscoaque will be the general hospital and depôt of Pillow’s division also, who will this evening re-enforce the hacienda now occupied by the 15th infantry on the Piedad road. This post, and the brigade advanced on the San Angel road, will communicate with each other freely.

Major-general Pillow will command those advanced forces, and cause one of his brigades to be at the archbishop’s palace, Tacubaya, at seven o’clock this evening, there to report to Major-general Worth. All the troops to be advanced this evening may be out the whole night.

“By command of Major-general SCOTT.

(Signed) “H. L. SCOTT, A. A. A. G.”

THE END.

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